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Contents

Pragmatic Philosophies of Science in Antiquity	Stewart H. Benedict	. 51
The Problem of Zola's Character Creation in <u>L'Argent</u>	Richard B. Grant	. 58
Thematic and Lexical Unity in Wolfgang Borchert	Edward Allen McCormick	. 66
Humor in Nadal-Award Spanish Novels	Dorothy McMahon	. 75
Traditional Motifs in the Caithréim Thoiridhealbhaigh	Leo F. McNamara	. 85
Nature in the Old Portuguese Lyric	K. S. Roberts	. 93
Recent Books in the Field of Medieval Literature	John A. Rea	. 102
Books Received 105

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PRAGMATIC PHILOSOPHIES OF SCIENCE IN ANTIQUITY

By Stewart H. Benedict, Michigan College of Mining and Technology

Pragmatism, the philosophic method which tries to "interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences"¹ and reject "abstraction and insufficiency . . . verbal solutions . . . fixed principles, closed systems, and pretended absolutes and origins . . .,"² is conventionally associated with late nineteenth-century American thought, especially the thought of C.S. Peirce and William James.

Very few, however, even among the most thoroughgoing pragmatists, assert that this method is either uniquely American or uniquely nineteenth-century in its origins.³ George Boas, for example, calls attention to the influence of the German voluntarists in general and Fichte in particular. James acknowledges a debt in dedicating his lecture series, "Pragmatism," to John Stuart Mill, and mentions such "forerunners" as Socrates, Aristotle, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, who used the method "in fragments."

James' comments in particular indicate his conviction that the bases of pragmatism, like those of many another school of philosophy, lie in classical antiquity. Whether they are to be encountered in their purest form in Socrates and Aristotle, though, is open to question. Historians of philosophy who have examined the problem have suggested that the origins are to be found rather in the Sophists, and specifically in Protagoras, basing their position, of course, on his observation that man is the measure of all things. Says Boas, "It is clear that such ideas as relativism in morals are extraordinarily like many that are preached today, like some forms of pragmatism, for instance."⁴ Commenting on Protagoras as a source, Marvin says, "In short, Protagoras was a believer in common sense as against science and in the practical political and social experience of mankind as against the doctrines of moral and political theorists. He was an empiricist and a pragmatist."⁵ Schilling, somewhat more cautious, says, "Man könnte ihn fast als einen Vorläufer der Pragmatisten betrachten."⁶

Although comments like these come from men of some authority in philosophy, the question may well be raised as to whether such definite conclusions can fairly be drawn from the few fragments of Protagoras' work still extant. Certainly a relativistic morality per se is not sufficient justification for characterizing a philosopher as a pragmatist.

Similarly, an eagerness to find Graeco-Roman parallels seems to have influenced such a sophisticated analyst as H. M. Kallen to make this rather sweeping statement:

The subsequent /to the fifth century/ history of ancient philosophy is the record of an attempt to establish the ultimate victory of man over the flux, in the face of scepticism. It is the record of a conflict between what might be called the Platonic and the Protagorean camps-- the one asserting the existence of and seeking an eternal good for man, the other contenting itself with such relatively constant good as the flux would permit.

And therefore the problems of knowledge were abandoned entirely and men were advised to depend on the certainties of practice. The culture and the moral code which Rome took over then . . . was a group of systematic moralities, notably Epicurean and Stoic, which tended to bolster up man in an actual world⁷

This attempt to view half of the corpus of Hellenistic and Roman philosophy as quasi-pragmatism must be regarded as more than a little Procrustean.

Because pragmatism in ancient philosophers seems to exist principally in the eyes of the beholders, and because the demands of science and technology are what they are, it is perhaps more valuable to examine the works of men in these latter disciplines for evidence of a pragmatic bias.

That the search for a methodology is a significant branch of the philosophy of science is maintained by all students of the subject. Benjamin puts it this way: "The philosophy of science has as its task the consideration of three main types of problem: 1, the ascertainment of the limits of the special sciences; 2, the critical examination of the method of science; 3, the clarification of the basic concepts and postulates of the sciences."⁸ And some philosophers go beyond this. In Scientific Thought, C. D. Broad implies that methodology is the central concern of this field of philosophy.⁹

It must be kept in mind, however, that neither empirical nor inductive method, nor a synthesis of them, can be equated with pragmatism, even though they are ordinarily concomitants of it. A number of Greek and Roman scientists are empiricists and a number advocate induction as the proper method in science, but these men are not necessarily pragmatists. A case in point is provided by the works of the Hippocratic collection; here the authors consistently urge extreme caution in establishing medical theories not firmly rooted in practice.

In Precepts, for instance, the author affirms, "However, one must pay attention in medicine not primarily to credible theories, but to practice combined with reason. For a theory is a composite memory of those things

perceived through sensation."¹⁰ He continues in a similar vein, "Yet I approve of theorizing too, if its bases lie in individual incidents, and its conclusions are reached in accordance with phenomena."¹¹

Furthermore, in his On Ancient Medicine Hippocrates is equally impatient of those who wish to base medical science on first principles: "Therefore I have thought that it /medicine/ does not need an empty postulate as do those things which are inscrutable and doubtful . . . for example, things in the sky or under the earth."¹² After voicing his view that the origins of medicine lay in pure trial and error, especially dietetic trial and error, he asks, "To this discovery and investigation what more accurate name could be given than medicine?"¹³ Then he calls attention to the fact that medical knowledge is still being added to and medical theory revised in the same way: " . . . even at the present time students of gymnastics and athletic exercises are continually making some new discovery by investigating, using the same method, what food and drink . . . impart more strength."¹⁴ Actually, throughout the work he reiterates his faith in induction as sound medical practice: "I personally cannot understand how those who . . . abandon the old method to base the art on a postulate possibly treat their patients according to what they have postulated!"¹⁵

The Roman hydraulic engineer Frontinus is even more closely wedded to the practical: In the Aqueducts he quickly acquaints the reader with his position; concluding his catalogue of the aqueducts, he appends, "With such an array of indispensable structures carrying so many waters, compare, if you will, the idle Pyramids or the useless, though famous, works of the Greeks."¹⁶

Equally revealing are the comments which Frontinus makes about his method of procedure on assuming the office of water-commissioner. Finding that the imperial records gave a water supply totaling 12,755 quinariae, he was surprised to learn scrupulosa inquisitione that 14,018 quinariae were being delivered to the city. He continues in this way:

Since I considered it the most important function of my office to determine the facts concerning the water-supply, my astonishment at this state of affairs stirred me profoundly and led me to investigate how it happened that more was being delivered than belonged to the property, so to speak. Accordingly, I first of all undertook measurements of the intakes of the conduits and discovered a total supply far greater--that is, by about 10,000 quinariae--than I found in the records¹⁷

Sextus Empiricus, the later Alexandrian and Greek physician, is,

of course, the chief spokesman for post-Christian scepticism and, as such, he seems to approach pragmatism. In his attack on Protagorean doctrine, for instance, he says, " . . . and he dogmatizes too about the existence in matter of the reasons of all appearances, non-evident subjects about which we are skeptical."¹⁸

But, even though these scientists have the "attitude of looking away from first things, principles, 'categories,' . . . and of looking toward last things, fruits, consequences, facts,"¹⁹ they may not accurately be classified as pragmatists, for, by definition, the practical man who does not consider that his action is "passing into the idea or theory phase for the sake of evolving a more adequate practice"²⁰ cannot be called pragmatic. As H. H. Bawden puts it:

The pragmatic philosophy . . . has one . . . criticism to make of the man of affairs--he stands in his own light, stands so close to his practice that he loses perspective, holding a nominal theory which does not correspond with the real theory of his practice. His attitude is essentially uncritical and primitive--naïve, total, implicit, rather than reflective, discriminating, and definitive²¹

On these bases, then, we must deny the title of pragmatist to Frontinus, the naïve, uncritical man of affairs; to the Hippocratic writers, for whom theory is subordinate in the cognitive process; and to Empiricus, for whom the theoretical has no validity.

To turn to classical writers who can be classified as pragmatists, using these same criteria, it can be demonstrated that two Roman author-scientists may properly be so defined, although both have received little notice by modern writers on philosophy.

The first of these is Celsus, the physician, or perhaps the layman writer. In his "Preface" to On Medicine, he attacks those who try to proceed from theory: "Even philosophers would have been the greatest physicians if pure reason could accomplish it; as it is, they have an abundance of words and no knowledge of healing."²² Further, he is absolutely skeptical as to the value of speculation: "Since, therefore, that i.e., the cause is uncertain and incomprehensible, help must be sought rather from the ascertained and investigated, that is, what experience has taught in the actual treatments For even a farmer or a pilot is made . . . by practice."²³ Celsus thus believes firmly that the only proper method for the physician is empiricism: " . . . diseases, however, are cured not by eloquence but by remedies."²⁴ Similarly, "Where there is no certain knowledge about a thing . . . opinion

alone cannot find a certain remedy."²⁵

Thus far, these comments of Celsus sound not unlike extracts from the Hippocratic collection. There is, however, one further tenet of Celsus' philosophy which separates him from those who went before. Like contemporary pragmatists, he takes the theoretical and the ideal into account insofar as they may serve to improve practice, and he explicitly says so. As Bawden explains, "He [the pragmatist] sees the place of ideas in the universe: he is an idealist. But he maintains that ideas are always instrumental to action: he is a practical idealist."²⁶ Like Celsus, contemporary pragmatism rejects the notion that it establishes a dichotomy between theory and practice: "... the reflective . . . pragmatist does not forget that theory is itself practice undergoing transformation. Ideas are the metamorphosis of action There can be no contradiction between theory and practice. Theory is simply practice in solution."²⁷ And Celsus' position is just that; "... and so this contemplation of the nature of things, although it does not make the physician, nevertheless makes him more apt and perfected in medicine."²⁸ And again: "The task of medicine really is reasoning"²⁹ Finally, he summarizes his position by re-emphasizing the interdependence of theory and practice, saying, "Therefore . . . I believe that medicine ought to be rational but to be instructed by evident causes."³⁰

Another Roman philosophy of science which is strikingly pragmatic is that of Vitruvius. In the opening passages of On Architecture, he states his conviction that architecture combines theory and practice. The purely practical architect, he continues, can never gain "pro laboribus auctoritatem," but he is still superior to the theoretician, who is following "umbram non rem." Thus the practicing architect must not forget that his work contains a theoretical element. Vitruvius feels that the study of philosophy is a valuable reminder of this: "Moreover philosophy explains the nature of things, called physiologia in Greek. It is necessary to have studied this carefully because it contains many different natural problems."³¹

It is in his treatment of particulars, however, that Vitruvius reveals most clearly the extent to which he adheres to the pragmatic dictum that usefulness is a determinant of value. A typical comment occurs in his discussion of walls: "About the material of which the wall itself is to be constructed or completed, no rule must be laid down in advance, because we cannot have the materials we want in all places. But where there are square stones, or flint, or rubble stones, or baked or unbaked brick, these must be used."³²

Not even for the location of temples can a hard and fast rule be drawn: "But the views which sacred temples ought to have should be so arranged (if no reason interferes and the opportunity presents itself) that the temple and the image . . . look toward the western part of Heaven. . . . If, however,

the nature of the site interferes, then the view of the temple must be changed"33 The same flexibility must be allowed the planner of shipyards: "But no rule about their dimensions ought to be laid down"34

Many other examples occur, all illustrative of Vitruvius' conscious acceptance of the maxim, "If it works, it's right." This paragraph from the definition of architecture, which contains a most significant juxtaposition of terms, might serve to summarize his position:

His work originates from practice and theory. Practice is the continued and frequent contemplation of the method of executing any work by hand in such material as is needed for the conversion to the end proposed. Theory, on the other hand, sets forth and explains things constructed according to skill and reason.³⁵

Students of the arts and the pure sciences have been apt to think that the practitioner, the technologist, neither requires nor has a philosophy of science. This, of course, need not be the case: a man who works at the level of practice may be satisfied to know how to carry out a specific series of operations, but he may be equally interested in the relation his contribution bears to the science from which it has originated and to scientific thought in general.

It is perhaps because of this attitude that contemporary scholars looking for pragmatic parallels in Greek and Roman thought have ignored ancient technology and have tried to find pragmatism in classical philosophers, where its presence seems at best dubious. Examination of the works of Vitruvius and Celsus, however, indicates that both of them have philosophies of science which are pragmatic in the strictest sense of that term.

NOTES

1. William James, "What Pragmatism Means," Pragmatism (New York: Meridian Books, 1955), p. 42.
2. Ibid., p. 45.
3. H. H. Bawden, The Principles of Pragmatism (Boston, 1910), p. 3: "Pragmatism is a recent movement of thought"
4. George Boas, The Adventures of Human Thought (New York, 1929), p. 37.
5. Walter T. Marvin, The History of European Philosophy (New York, 1923), p. 120.
6. Kurt Schilling, Geschichte der Philosophie (Munich, 1951), I, p. 110.
7. Horace M. Kallen, "A Pragmatic Interpretation of the History of Philosophy," The Mid-West Quarterly (October 1916), 78.

8. A. Cornelius Benjamin, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science (New York, 1937), p. 33.
9. C. D. Broad, Scientific Thought (New York, 1923), p. 23.
10. Hippocrates, Precepts, I.
11. Ibid.
12. Hippocrates, On Ancient Medicine, I.
13. Ibid., III.
14. Ibid., IV.
15. Ibid., XV.
16. Frontinus, The Aqueducts, (Charles E. Bennett--Clemens Herschel trans.), I: 16.
17. Ibid., II: 64.
18. Sextus Empiricus, Outlines of Pyrrhonism, XXXII.
19. James, p. 47.
20. Bawden, p. 37.
21. Ibid., p. 11.
22. Celsus, On Medicina, XXIX.
23. Ibid., XXXI - XXXII.
24. Ibid., XXXIX.
25. Ibid., XLVI - XLVII.
26. Bawden, p. 7.
27. Ibid.
28. Celsus, XLVII.
29. Ibid., XLVIII.
30. Ibid., LXXIV.
31. Vitruvius, On Architecture, I:1:vii.
32. Ibid., I:5:viii.
33. Ibid., IV:5: i-ii.
34. Ibid., V:12: vii.
35. Ibid., I:1:i.

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THE PROBLEM OF ZOLA'S CHARACTER CREATION IN L'ARGENT

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One of the most solidly entrenched verities concerning the novels of Emile Zola is that he cannot create a good character. Despite occasional exceptions (e. g., Etienne Lantier in Germinal, Buteau and Old Fouan in La Terre), Zola's characters cannot compare with those of Balzac as intense living creations. The basic reason for Zola's failure is, of course, that his deterministic view of man made him envisage his personages as puppets manipulated by a destiny beyond their control. Further, his tendency to reduce human beings to their animal level dehumanized them by definition. Finally, his occasional desire for symbolism made abstractions out of some of his characters.

All this is well known, but there is another reason, one that has not been sufficiently explored, a more technical consideration than has usually been advanced. To put it very simply, in the majority of cases Zola started the composition of his novel with the main theme clearly in mind, and with some idea of the basic structure of the novel. The characters were developed as he composed his novel, and they came into being, not for themselves, but to support the ideas or narrative. Zola's own description of his method of composition does not bear out this statement. He explained his method (as he saw it) to the journalist Edmondo de Amicis:

Voici comment je fais un roman. Je ne le fais pas précisément, je le laisse se faire de lui-même. Je ne sais pas inventer des faits: ce genre d'imagination me manque absolument C'est pourquoi j'ai pris le parti de ne jamais m'occuper du sujet. Je commence à travailler à mon roman, sans savoir ni quels événements s'y dérouleront, ni quels personnages y prendront part, ni quels en seront le commencement et la fin. Je connais seulement mon personnage principal, mon Rougon ou mon Macquart, homme ou femme, et c'est une vieille connaissance. Je m'occupe de lui; je médite sur son tempérament, sur la famille où il est né, sur ses premières impressions et sur la classe où j'ai résolu de le faire vivre, l'air qu'il devra respirer, sa profession, ses habitudes, jusqu'aux plus insignifiantes occupations auxquelles il consacrera ses moments perdus.¹

This description sounds as if Zola created a character in detail and then set out to put him into a situation. He certainly gives this impression in his theoretical writings, and it is perhaps true of a novel like L'Oeuvre, built so completely around one figure, but for a fair number of Zola's novels it is inapplicable. Of course the naturalist selected his Rougon or his Macquart, but

in choosing this figure he was not really choosing a character, but rather a name coupled with the bare outline of a dominant trait or two, as indicated in the original genealogical tree. In short, the protagonist starts out in most cases as a skeleton which will acquire the flesh and blood attributes necessary for existence only by the time the novel is completed. This character is at first subordinated to a general idea (e. g., the problem of miners, or the weakness of the French army). Consequently, one should not be too surprised to discover that his characteristics are determined to a considerable extent by the structure, composition, and ideas of the novel. As we have already indicated, this pattern of creation does not apply to every case, but there are enough such examples in the Rougon-Macquart so that each of the novels might warrant close analysis on this score. We shall limit ourselves to one of his later novels, L'Argent (1891), and consider but two of its characters. Perhaps because it is not one of the great novels of the series, it falls easily into its component parts, enabling one to follow without great difficulty the process of creation.

L'Argent is the story of the spectacular rise and fall of a banking house, the Banque Universelle. As we witness its meteoric career, we are immersed in the whole world of speculation and high finance operating in and around the Paris Bourse. Zola's story is closely copied from the dramatic crash of the Union Générale (1878-1882). The latter had as its President one Eugène Bontoux, an engineer, and as its Director one Jules Feder. It invested widely in European railroads and derived most of its income from these sources. It could have had a normal growth except that, in an effort to provide a speculative profit for key personnel, it tried to expand too rapidly. Secretly and illegally repurchasing its own shares, thus using up its needed cash reserve, it was soon in a precarious financial condition. The bank had caught the public fancy, however, as a "Catholic" bank. Bontoux had had the idea of creating a financial reserve to support the Papacy, which had lost its temporal possessions, and he annually contributed funds to the Vatican. Within three years, the shares of stock were quoted at over three thousand francs on the Bourse. Then a sudden attack by the bears, coupled with a general slump in business prosperity, caused the bubble to burst. One month later the Union Générale was dead. Eugène Bontoux and Jules Feder were tried and convicted of fraud, but allowed to flee the country. Bontoux crowned the whole sordid affair by a futile attempt to blame the bank's collapse on a Jewish-Freemason coalition, hostile to the success of any Catholic bank.²

This was the story that Zola transposed directly into L'Argent. Item by item one may compare history and fiction: the life span of the banks is similar, the financial figures are identical, the Banque Universelle is even a "Catholic" bank, and the characters have obvious counterparts. But Zola began his ébauche³ for this novel without mentioning any of these parallels. His initial concern is solely with the ideas that will be at the heart of his story: "Je voudrais . . . ne pas conclure au dégoût de la vie (pessimisme). La vie telle qu'elle est, mais acceptée, malgré tout"; "Sur l'argent, sans l'attaquer, sans le défendre";

"Montrer que l'argent est devenu pour beaucoup la dignité de la vie"; "Opposer la classe aisée à la classe pauvre," etc. Only when the basic themes of his novel were clear in his mind did he turn to the problem of his protagonist, and his first musings show this hero purely in terms of his function: "Je crois que ce que je préférerais, ce serait un homme de peu . . . s'établissant banquier. . . faisant une affaire colossale, avec une idée de génie . . . planant un instant sur Paris, conquérant tout."⁴ Then Zola ran through the list of characters eligible for the role and concluded: "Je n'ai guère que Saccard pour mon héros central."⁵ Even Saccard, the rapacious speculator of La Curée (1871), was not perfect for the role. In the former novel he does not seem to have the stature to dominate, even for a moment, the entire world of French finance. Thus Zola added quickly: "Un Saccard nouvelle forme, engraisé, remis sur pied."

We may now test Zola's alleged method of composition against the reality of L'Argent. When Zola says that he starts with a character, he is correct, provided that one understand that he begins with a prior idea and that the character is a function of it. It is also true that Zola meditates on the hero's character, family, etc., although this meditation is brief, to judge from the ébauche. But when the novelist claims that he ponders "ses habitudes, jusqu'aux plus insignifiantes occupations auxquelles il consacrera ses moments perdus," he distorts the true situation. The petits faits significatifs are not all determined by initial méditation. Many are acquired in the course of the novel's composition in a way that we shall now examine.

In L'Argent, Saccard occupies the post of Director of the Banque Universelle, the same position held by Jules Feder in the Union Générale. Nothing seems to be known of Feder except his financial activity in behalf of the firm. As Zola incorporated the entire financial structure of the Union Générale into L'Argent without any change, Saccard in his official functions of Director emerges as a carbon copy of Jules Feder. Throughout the novel Zola spends considerable time following the financial maneuvering and summarizes it at the end:

L'accusation lui reprochait: le capital sans cesse augmenté pour enfiévrer les cours et pour faire croire que la société possédait l'intégralité de ses fonds; la simulation de souscriptions et de versements non effectués, grâce aux comptes ouverts à Sabatani et aux autres hommes de paille, lesquels payaient seulement par des jeux d'écritures (p. 410).⁶

These are the same charges that the Third Republic brought against Feder. Thus Feder's underhanded actions contribute in forming the final characterization of Saccard. Zola could not have meditated these details in advance, for he did not master the intricacies of the financial picture until after starting the ébauche.

Saccard is further developed as a character in that he is also partly the

speculator Jules Mirès. Some critics, ignorant of Feder's contribution, have oversimplified the issue and stated that Saccard is Mirès,⁷ but it is certain that Mirès forms a part of the composite character. Zola read about this notorious swindler in Ernest Feydeau's *Mémoires d'un Coulissier*, but the direct use of Mirès came from the following story that Maxime du Camp told Zola, and which he wrote down in his notes:

Les Sapia. Une fille superbe, Edwige Sapia. Devient fille galante . . . Edwige devient la maîtresse de Chaix-d'Est-Ange [an Imperial prosecutor] . . . Il l'entretenait très mal, elle se vendait ailleurs. Elle devient la maîtresse de Mirès. Un jour une femme de chambre, par rancune, fit entrer Chaix-d'Est-Ange, comme Edwige se trouvait avec Mirès . . . La scène fut terrible, les deux hommes "aboyaient." En s'en allant, Chaix-d'Est-Ange cria à Mirès, "Vous, je vous retrouverai." Aussi, dès qu'il devient ministre de l'empire, un de ses premiers actes fut de poursuivre Mirès.⁸

The same scene is re-enacted in the novel with Saccard as Mirès, Delcambre as Chaix-d'Est-Ange, and Baroness Sandorff as Edwige. The coarseness and brutality of this scene is extreme, and while there is no question that it fits the essence of Saccard's character as originally portrayed in *La Curée*, there is still a difference. In both novels, Saccard is shown as interested only in money. He sacrifices everything to it, including his wives, without feeling either loss or desire. In this scene, however, Saccard soon loses his self-possession. The two men "nez à nez, les crocs dehors, ils aboyaient. Oublieux d'eux-mêmes. . . dans ce flot de vase immonde du rut qu'ils se disputaient, le magistrat et le financier en vinrent à une querelle de charretiers ivres . . . ils écumaient de la boue" (p. 229). This extra dimension of Saccard's personality is, of course, consistent within Zola's vision of man as *la bête humaine*. However, this specific elaboration of it does not develop with the character; it is inserted directly into the novel from a chance outside source.

Still another facet of Saccard's character, one totally absent in the earlier *La Curée*, is his theoretical speculation on the nature of commerce. The repeated parallel of speculation to copulation is stated succinctly by Saccard: ". . . sans la luxure, on ferait beaucoup d'enfants? Sur cent enfants qu'on manque de faire, il arrive qu'on en fabrique un à peine. C'est l'excès qui amène le nécessaire . . . Eh bien! sans la spéculation, on ne ferait pas d'affaires" (p. 142). And Zola adds at the end of the novel: "Pourquoi faire porter à l'argent la peine des saletés et des crimes dont il est la cause? L'amour est-il moins souillé, lui qui crée la vie?" (p. 428).

As various critics have suggested,⁹ this re-affirmation of the power of life coincided with his liaison with Jeanne Rozerot and the birth of his children.

The parallel between commerce and reproduction, with its insistence on the simultaneity of birth and death, good and evil, is typical of Zola and here is symbolized in Saccard himself: his activities create life and wealth in the Near East, poverty and destruction in France. It is true that this concept was present from the very beginning of the ébauche for L'Argent, but it shows a change from the original Saccard of La Curée. The critic Augustin Filon sensed this change as he wrote:

Il /Zola/ a pris ... ce triste Saccard ... un voleur et un goujat. Ramassant ce misérable dans la boue ... M. Zola en a fait le "poète du million," "le Napoléon de la spéculation" ... M. Zola a fait de terribles efforts pour rejoindre le Saccard de L'Argent au Saccard de La Curée.¹⁰

In the opinion of the hostile Filon, the naturalist did not quite succeed. Saccard's ability to theorize does help lift him above his earlier pettiness and gives him some stature, but this facet of his personality does not stem from a single unified vision of the character. It was tacked on, and was not the last thing to be so added.

The final superimposition is Saccard's anti-Semitism. In order to understand how he acquired it, we must do more than assume that Saccard hates his Jewish rival Gundermann. His systematic prejudice is more than personal rancor. Here is a fair sample: "Voilà des siècles que la race juive nous envahit et triomphe . . . Il /Gundermann/ sera un jour le maître de la terre. . . . Oui, la haine du juif, je l'ai dans la peau, oh! de très loin, aux racines mêmes de mon être" (p. 414). Where did this diatribe come from? It goes back to Eugène Bontoux, the anti-Semitic President of the Union Générale.

To comprehend how Saccard acquired this characteristic, we must first explore another major figure in L'Argent, Georges Hamelin. He figures as the counterpart to Bontoux, but he was not first envisaged as an individual. Like Saccard, he took on form first as a function. Initially, Zola did not even plan to use him as a source of engineering ideas for the firm, even though the novelist was aware of Bontoux's historical role. At first, we remember, it was Saccard who would have an idée de génie, and establish une affaire colossale. But here a serious difficulty must have arisen. Saccard was no trained engineer who might be able to imagine any exploitable scientific idea. Zola's first solution to this problem was to have his protagonist steal the idea from a Jewish colleague in finance, and then establish himself independently as a rival. Their conflict would stem from this initial step. This idea suited the novelist for a moment, but he was not really satisfied, for shortly after he wrote in his notes: "Cela me donne simplement un drame de Bourse. C'est parfait, mouvementé, et c'est ce que je veux en somme, le trafic sur l'argent. Mais cela ne me suffit pas, car je voudrais avoir un coin de drame passionnel." ¹¹ Zola's desire to

include this element is typical with him. Every novel in the Rougon-Macquart cycle has some love story or sexual conflict.

In this connection, the naturalist examined and rejected various women who might serve his purpose, a daughter of the nobility,¹² a courtesan.¹³ Zola began to realize that the woman "peut . . . devenir centrale."¹⁴ Finally, after considerable thought, he created a woman of much common sense, given to philosophizing, who would be the Madame Caroline of the novel, the mistress of Saccard. It is through her that Hamelin comes into being. Apparently Zola had in the back of his mind the idea of utilizing an engineer, even though the initial speculation in the ébauche shows no hint of his coming existence. Then without warning he is there:

Pour qu'elle /Madame Caroline/ ne soit pas seule à monologuer, le mieux serait de lui donner un enfant à instruire. Il faudrait dès lors mettre un lien entre elle et l'ingénieur qui a des idées. Ce serait son frère. Elle aurait voyagé avec lui, saurait tout. Mais pas d'enfant alors . . . Comment l'ingénieur est-il venu échouer chez Saccard? pour une petite affaire . . . , Saccard a foi en lui, et une petite affaire exécutée lui donne raison. Donc il a recueilli le frère et la soeur.¹⁵

It was now possible for Zola to drop the idea of having Saccard steal his ideas. In the beginning, Hamelin does not seem to figure as an important character, but he quickly outgrows his limited job of providing occasional technical aid and ideas. He is, after all, the brother of one of the two principal personages and will live under the same roof with them. More than that, now that he will figure in the novel it is natural that he will play the role that Bontoux did in history. It was in this way that Hamelin, introduced into the novel by the back door, so to speak, was created and grew to assume a major role.

What would be this man's character? It is interesting to note that Zola did not even put the question in these terms. He was more interested in Hamelin's function. Here Zola made sure to pattern him closely on Bontoux. Like the President of the Union Générale, Hamelin is an engineer who claims ignorance of the financial workings of a bank and insists that the statutes be changed to eliminate his participation in financial matters; like Bontoux, Hamelin is persuaded against his better judgment to accept the Presidency. Hamelin is also often outside the country in his capacity of engineer, supervising some project, and, like his historical prototype, he returns to Paris just after the final crash, is arrested along with Saccard, eventually receives the same sentence and fine as did Bontoux, and flees the country.

His character is a natural consequence of his function. He enters the novel as a serious, clean-living, religious and very naïve young man. Zola

chose these attributes partly because they resembled those of Bontoux (as presented by the latter in his self-defense), but more because he sought a symbolic antithesis to the rapacious Saccard. He wanted a man who would be unable to survive in the cutthroat financial world. As president of the bank, he tries to keep the operations honest. While his moral standards are lowered a little, Zola considers him to be an honest man (p. 262). He is the mirror in which the evil of the others is reflected.

One final problem remained. If Zola wished Hamelin to keep the reader's admiration, he could not have him retain Bontoux's pathological anti-Semitism, nor was the author eager to eliminate the Jewish question altogether, for, as he wrote at the beginning of the *ébauche*: "Enfin, ne pas oublier que la question juive va se trouver au fond de mon sujet; car je ne puis pas toucher à l'argent sans évoquer le rôle des juifs, autrefois et aujourd'hui." 16

It is true that Hamelin has a low opinion of the Jews, but he keeps it to himself. He blames his downfall not on Gundermann, but on his own shortcomings, wondering what sin was his that had resulted in God's not permitting to bring to completion the Catholic bank which would have restored the Pope's prominence and independence. Thus Zola decided to transfer Bontoux's violent anti-Semitism to Saccard, and it is the latter who parrots his wild accusations against the Jews: ". . . l'Universelle étranglée par le gouvernement pour que Gundermann continue son commerce! toute banque catholique trop puissante écrasée comme un danger social, pour assurer le définitif triomphe de la juiverie, qui nous mangera, et bientôt" (p. 414). Such language would certainly have seemed out of place in the mouth of the gentle Hamelin. In Saccard it seems more natural, yet again it is not developed from a central vision of the protagonist's character.

To summarize: In the case both of Hamelin and of Saccard, the characters were determined in imitation of historical personages (Bontoux, Feder, and Mirès), partly as functions of their role as officers in the bank, and both have a certain symbolic value. The difficulty with this method of character creation is not hard to see. When a fictional creation is forced to be three things at once, an occasional inconsistency may occur. For instance, after repeatedly insisting on Hamelin's lack of financial knowledge, Zola presents his engineer's objections to Saccard's financial plans in these words:

Je n'aime guère ce bilan si hâtif . . . ce sont de véritables dividendes que vous allez donner là à vos actionnaires, puisque vous libérez leurs titres, et il faut être certain que toutes les sommes sont bien acquises; autrement, on nous accuserait avec raison d'avoir distribué des dividendes fictifs (p. 259).

Why did Zola include this technical language, so out of character for

Hamelin? Partially to inform the reader of the real situation, one would guess, but primarily because he was following the account of the Union Générale. Bontoux had written the company to question the statement of earnings that the director had prepared for release. Zola simply followed his source, apparently unaware of the error he was making.

In the case of Saccard, there is no real inconsistency within L'Argent. The weakness here is that the character never really comes alive. It is in this respect that Zola's method of characterization shows its inadequacy. Saccard was first selected to satisfy the needs of the plot, then he was supplied bit by bit with various ideological traits that interested Zola, not Saccard, and finally he was handicapped by gratuitous attributes of animal bestiality and anti-Semitism. The predictable result was similar to the proverbial horse put together by a committee: it emerged looking like a camel. The magic of creation was absent.

These same defects in the method of character creation may perhaps explain similar drawbacks to other novels. The problem deserves further study. At any rate, it is fortunate that Zola possessed other gifts. His epic grandeur compensates for his sometimes artificial characters, and he still speaks to us today with power and with meaning.

NOTES

1. Alexandre Zévaès, Zola (Paris, 1945), p. 36.
2. Eugène Bontoux, L'Union Générale: sa vie, sa mort, son programme (Paris, 1888).
3. The manuscript worksheets for L'Argent (on deposit at the Bibliothèque Nationale) comprise two volumes: "Fonds français, Nouvelles acquisitions, 10268 and 10269," hereafter referred to by number alone.
4. Fol. 381, 10268.
5. Fol. 382.
6. All citations are from the Bernouard edition, ed. Maurice LeBlond (Paris, 1927-1929).
7. E. g., the 1952 exposition at the Bibliothèque Nationale; also Georges Lote, "Zola historien du second Empire," Revue des Etudes Napoléoniennes, XIV (juillet-août 1918), 39-87.
8. Foll. 432-33, 10268.
9. Angus Wilson, Emile Zola: An Introductory Study of his Novels (London and New York, 1952), ch. IV. Also F. W. J. Hemmings, Emile Zola (Oxford, 1952), ch. XII.
10. Augustin Filon, review of L'Argent (no title), Revue Bleue (March 14, 1891).
11. Fol. 389.
12. Fol. 393.
13. Foll. 396, 400.
14. Fol. 400.
15. Fol. 435, 10268.
16. For full treatment of Zola's attitude toward the Jews, see my article "The Jewish Question in Zola's L'Argent," PMLA, LXX (December 1955), 955-967.

THEMATIC AND LEXICAL UNITY IN WOLFGANG BORCHERT

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The enthusiasm and excitement with which readers and critics of the mid-forties greeted Wolfgang Borchert's collected works, especially his play Draussen vor der Tür, have today diminished to an almost inaudible whisper. In speaking of Draussen Meyer-Marwitz, editor of the Gesamtwerk, uses the word Schrei:

Das ist Borcherts Stück--Schrei! Nicht mehr
und nicht weniger. Nur so kann es begriffen
und bewertet werden.¹

In one of the very few scholarly studies on Borchert an American Germanist refers to him as the "lost voice of a new Germany."² That was more than eight years ago. Since then, and despite the undeniable impact this young writer's works made on postwar Germany, little or nothing has been written on him.

The implications of this fact would seem to be obvious: Borchert's Schrei came at a time when Germany's war generation demanded literary articulation. However, Germany and German literature soon moved on to other things, and the understandable desire to forget the bitter postwar years caused Borchert to be consigned, at least temporarily, to the literary dustbin. For Borchert, so the implication goes, is zeitgebunden, or at least no longer zeitgemäss; his literary merit, if such there be, is not so impressive as to justify further serious interest and study.

One might muster counterarguments. Much of Borchert is anthologized today, both here and in Germany. Literary historians who view the contemporary scene do devote a few paragraphs, sometimes even pages, to him. Yet the balance is on the other side, and, since it is historians, strictly speaking, rather than critics who give Wolfgang Borchert his honorable mention, one must conclude that it is the socio-historical Borchert, the Borchert of the Schrei and the voice of a new Germany rather than the literary artist who has found his place--perhaps a modest one--in German literature.

This study does not intend to offer a rebuttal to such a conclusion. Moreover, it is perhaps too early, or quite unnecessary, to attempt any sort of rehabilitation. It does seem important, however, that the question of literary worth, of enduring artistic merit in his work, be raised and a balance sought between documentary and intrinsic value.

As the title of this study indicates, there is in Borchert's work a unity

of subject and expression or, more exactly, of word and theme which, if sustained, should remove much of the sting of adverse criticism and offer stronger arguments to the apologists. Here, specifically, are three brief examples of both criticism and apology:

Sein Werk glich einem Lavastrom, aus dem Feuergrund eines Vulkans emporgeschleudert und in ursprünglicher Wildheit erstarrt. Mancher stand ein wenig ratlos und ängstlich vor dieser Wildheit. Mancher entrüstet und feindlich. Man vermisste jene Glätte und Politur, mit denen die konventionelle menschliche Gesellschaft der Wahrheit gern die Rauheit und Schärfe nimmt, damit sich ja nur keiner verletze.³

Worin besteht das Aufrüttelnde und Erschütternde dieses Stücks /Draussen vor der Tür/? Sicher nicht in der dramatischen Kunst, die sich über die Gesetze des Dramas und Theaters hinwegsetzt und sich den schweren Missgriff leistet, Gott als jammernden und hilflosen Greis auf die Bühne zu bringen. Das kleine Werk hat vielmehr die Bedeutung eines Dokuments, das die Lage der Kriegsjugend bezeichnet.⁴

In considering Borchert's Weltanschauung we must keep in mind three important physical factors: his youth, his state of health, and the fact that all his writing was crowded into two hectic disease-ridden years... To expect a well-defined consistency under such conditions would be illogical.⁵

In each example one fact seems to stand out above all others: the overwhelming emphasis on the biographical, the fact of extreme youth, intense suffering, frantic haste, youthful stridency, premature death. Noticeably absent, however, is any suggestion that such biographical factors actually contribute in a tangible and positive way to the total aesthetic effect of his works and to the unity to which my title refers.

As might be expected from the brevity and urgency of Borchert's own life, his works are modest in quantity, limited in scope, fragmental in nature, and highly concentrated in theme. This is the first of two important facts about his composition. His only play, Draussen vor der Tür, originally performed as a Hörspiel, tells of a soldier's return home from war and

imprisonment. His health is broken, his wife is living with someone else, his conscience is plagued by the death of eleven comrades he had led in battle, and his parents have been driven to suicide as a consequence of overzealous Nazism before the collapse. God is old and helpless, the people about him are hungry, lonely, unemployed. The soldier, Beckmann, tries to drown himself in the Elbe, but the Elbe will not have him. His final plea is for an answer to the question: "Wohin soll ich denn? Wovon soll ich leben? Mit wem? Für was? Wohin sollen wir denn auf dieser Welt?"⁶ No answer is forthcoming.

This pattern and view of the shattered postwar world of the mid-forties is repeated in virtually all of Borchert's other works, some thirty-nine stories, most of them without any well-developed plot or conventional external structure. Die Küchenuhr, reprinted in at least two anthologies and an American textbook, Die lange lange Strasse lang, likewise popularly anthologized, and the Lesebuch-geschichten, to name a few, offer additional variations on the common theme of war, its aftermath, hunger and loneliness, despair and isolation from an equally helpless Mitwelt.⁷ The sense of immediacy and urgency has, of course, suffered with the passage of time. At least this is true with respect to content and message. But Borchert's mode of expression and his choice of forms--both of them as typical as his choice of themes--retain their brilliant and unexpected qualities, their timelessness and unique appropriateness. It is this second important fact of composition--the stylistic and lexical peculiarities--that I shall examine now in some detail and attempt to relate to theme as part of an inseparable whole.

I have made no mention up to now of Borchert's poetry. By common agreement his lyrics are relatively immature, sometimes imitative, never so forceful or convincing as his prose. They were written between 1940 and 1945, that is to say, before Borchert settled on prose as his ideal medium. The poems (there are only twenty-nine in the collected works) are almost without exception less pessimistic than his prose. Most employ the end-rhyme, as in the one called "Grosstadt":

Die Göttin Grosstadt hat uns ausgespuckt
In dieses wüste Meer von Stein.
Wir haben ihren Atem eingeschluckt,
Dann liess sie uns allein.

Die Hure Grosstadt hat uns zugeplinkt--
an ihren weichen und verderbten Armen
sind wir durch Lust und Leid gehinkt
und wollten kein Erbarmen.

Die Mutter Grosstadt ist uns mild und gross--
und wenn wir leer und müde sind,
nimmt sie uns in den grauen Schoss--
und ewig orgelt über uns der Wind!⁸

Whatever may be said of this as lyric poetry, it is quite obvious that there is little evidence here of the impassioned, accusing voice of his later works in prose. It is as though the verse form and rhyme were somehow too restricting, as though form were utterly incompatible with the terrifying, fragment-like outburst that we associate with Borchert. There is some significance in the fact that the scanty number of Borchert's poems includes some in which, despite the retention of end-rhyme, the verse threatens to dissolve into prose. The very titles of two such poems make this tendency to lyric prose more understandable: "Brief aus Russland" and "Der Mond lügt." Compare these now with some random examples of other titles: "Later-nentraum," "Abendlied," "Der Kuss," "Kinderlied," "Gedicht," "Liebeslied." The first stanza of "Brief aus Russland" suggests Borchert's poetry to prose transition rather strongly:

Man wird tierisch.
Das macht die eisenhaltige
Luft. Aber das faltige
Herz fühlt manchmal noch lyrisch.
Ein Stahlhelm im Morgensonnenschimmer.
Ein Buchfink singt und der Helm rostet.
Was wohl zu Hause ein Zimmer
Mit Bett und warm Wasser kostet?
Wenn man nicht so müde wär!⁹

The final stage, a typical passage from Borchert's prose, reveals the same pronounced rhythmic or musical quality common to his lyric poetry:

Aber manchmal, Vogel Einsam, manchmal, selten,
seltsam und selten, wenn die gelbglühende Strassen-
bahn die Strasse gnadenlos zurückgeschleudert hat
in ihre schwarze Verlassenheit, dann manchmal,
selten, seltsam und selten, dann bleibt manchmal
in mancher Stadt (oh so selten) doch noch ein
Fenster da. Ein helles warmes verführerisches
Viereck im steinern kalten Koloss, in der
fürchterlichen Schwärze der Nacht: ein Fenster.¹⁰

While it would not be entirely accurate to say that lyric poetry has simply been dissolved into prose here, we can nevertheless see clearly the change from density to extension and a striking shift from dependence on rhyme to

dependence on rhythm. There is an undeniable sweep to such periods or sentence groups as these, yet paradoxically the effect is not one of increasing ambiguity, variety, complexity and depth (such as might be true of the prose of Mann, Proust, even Voltaire, to mention three masters of the long sentence); we perceive, rather, a series of mounting sharp little additions, usually adverbial and hence without the explosive quality of verbal buildup, which lead in a circular pattern back to non-complexity and to one overpowering image.

This musical prose, as one might fairly call it, is intensified by repetition, much in the manner of the refrain of a folksong. Significantly enough, we find that the simple (though sometimes striking, even sensational) words--never gnadenlos or zurückgeschleudert, but such firmly assigned ones as manchmal, selten, Fenster--are the ones to bear the main burden of repetition. This principle is everywhere evident in Borchert's prose and suggests, I believe, a conscious insistence on simplicity and a return to the essential. The peculiar way in which the rhythmic quality and refrain-like repetitions are made subservient to Borchert's demand for simplicity with social overtones can be seen in the following short passage from Die lange lange Strasse lang:

Das kleine Mädchen hat Beine, die sind wie Finger
so dünn. Wie Finger im Winter. So dünn und so
rot und so blau und so dünn. Links zwei drei vier
machen die Beine. Das kleine Mädchen sagt immerzu:
Lieber Gott, gib mir Suppe. Lieber Gott, gib mir
Suppe. Ein Löffelchen nur. Ein Löffelchen nur.
Ein Löffelchen nur. Die Mutter hat Haare, die sind
so tot. Lange schon tot. Die Mutter sagt: Der
liebe Gott kann dir keine Suppe geben, er kann es
doch nicht. Warum kann der liebe Gott mir keine
Suppe geben? Er hat doch keinen Löffel. Den hat
er nicht. Das kleine Mädchen geht auf seinen
Fingerbeinen, den dünnen blauen Winterbeinen,
neben der Mutter.¹¹

The movement, unmistakable strong, has been described by one critic as spiral and progressive. "A simple epic thought," he goes on to say, ". . . winds through the prose, recurring in variations, monotonous, yet ever heightening the effect of the original mood, reducible to a series of a few words or short sentences which provide theme and variations."¹² The point is well made, but I should prefer to stress sameness rather than variation, the circular rather than the spiral; that is to say; a theme lexically returning to itself despite all variations and increments. For the fragments, the staccato sentences, the enumerations and variations do seem to be--perhaps paradoxically--devices for expressing one fundamental thought. In a sketch bearing the title

"Im Mai, Im Mai Schrie Der Kuckuck" Borchert says, "Denn für das grandiose Gebrüll dieser Welt und für ihre höllische Stille fehlen uns die armseligsten Vokabeln. Alles was wir tun können, ist: Addieren, die Summe versammeln, aufzählen, notieren."¹³ And elsewhere Borchert insists, "Dafür gibts keine Vokabel."¹⁴ This is not merely the admission of the impossibility of giving full articulation to truth or to man's shattered existence, it is the conviction that man's world is fundamentally two-dimensional, unilinear. Facts, images, sketches, words themselves can at best be used to suggest the whole. But because there is no one word to express the whole, Borchert uses many, each standing in something that approaches a one-to-one relationship to the inexpressible.

This carries with it the suggestion that symbol has an important place in Borchert's writing. The everpresent streetcar, "die gute gelbe Strassenbahn," for example, has been called the symbol of escape or egocentric encasement;¹⁵ then there is the Laterne, the wind, the constant use of the word unterwegs. Although it cannot be denied that these things and countless others--the city, the masses, a window, etc.--contain broad and powerful connotations, there is a certain danger in labeling them symbols and stopping there. Borchert's characters--Beckmann in Draussen vor der Tür, Leutnant Fischer, Billbrook the Canadian, the youth in Die Hundebäume--accept all such things as essential parts of their vision of life. But there are virtually no multiple meanings involved, the indeterminate quality and residual mystery are not there. The following are examples of Borchert's refusal to conceal and his insistence upon multiple references:

Das macht das Fenster, dass wir "draussen" sagen--
und weil wir selber drinnen sind.
Nach draussen muss man schauernd fragen,
Denn draussen ist der Wind.

Laternen stehn
schon hundert schwarze Nächte--
und abends, bald nach zehn,
wenn mancher schlafen möchte,
graut wohl die Strasse blass
und schweigend aus der Flut
von Seufzern, Stein und Glas.

Nun ist es unser Blut,
das so gewaltig rauscht--
da hält der Wind im Tanz den Schritt,
bleibt manchmal stehn,
als ob er lauscht.
Und die Laternen gehn
noch lange durch die Träume mit.¹⁶

And the first three lines of "Nachts":

Meine Seele ist wie eine Strassenlaterne.
Wenn es Nacht wird und die Sterne
aufgehn, beginnt sie zu sein.¹⁷

Rather than symbols one might best speak of Borchert's preference for similes, not submerged, but of the simple, unified kind, and outright definitions. To Borchert the city of Hamburg is simply that and nothing more; Beckmann is Beckmann; a lantern is a lantern, or at most something with which the soul may be compared, not by suggestion or reader association, but by pronouncement. Only by being what they are do they assume greater importance for Borchert's central thesis that man's problem--not his or Beckmann's or Lieutenant Fischer's, but man's--is utterly essential and simple.

Nowhere does Borchert attempt to give a final all-embracing statement or definition. His two manifestos plead for love and pacifism, yet here, too, we find no fusing of the multitude of simple things, shattered lives, familiar trivial objects, into an abstract philosophical formulation. Life can only be defined, and the great issues worked out at their simplest, most fundamental and hence truest level:

Denn dies ist das Leben: Das Fenster, die Frau,
und die Mainacht. Ein fleckiger Geldschein aufm
Tisch, Scholokade oder n Stück Schmuck.¹⁸

Dann sagte der mit der pendelnden Lampe: Das Leben!
Mein Gott, was ist das: Sich an Gerüche erinnern,
nach Türdrückern fassen.¹⁹

Sometimes--indeed usually--they cannot be. This is Borchert's description of a suicide:

Aber das Mädchen, das singt nicht. Das Mädchen, das
zählt, denn das Mädchen hat einen runden Bauch. Ihr
Bauch ist etwas zu rund. Und nun muss sie die ganze
Nacht am Bahnsteig stehen, weil einer von den 57 nicht
versichert war. Und nun zählt sie die ganze Nacht
die Waggonen. Eine Lokomotive hat 18 Räder. Ein Per-
sonenwagen 8. Ein Güterwagen 4. Das Mädchen mit
dem runden Bauch zählt die Waggonen und die Räder--
die Räder die Räder die Räder--78, sagt sie einmal,
das ist schon ganz schön. 62, sagt sie dann, das
reicht womöglich nicht. 110, sagt sie, das reicht.
Dann lässt sie sich fallen und fällt vor den Zug.²⁰

Such a description has its undeniable effect. Its hypnotic singsong is at once reminiscent of the passing train, its magnetic effect on the girl, and the insistently rising rhythm that ends in the girl's destruction.

Our example, however, raises in an acute form the problem of limits. How long can language sustain a situation as highly charged as this one? When does the tragic become the pathetic, and the pathetic the strain of bathos? Are not the devices in Borchert's prose too narrowly assigned and too often employed? Unfortunately, the passage just quoted does not end there. Here is the rest:

Der Zug hat eine Lokomotive, 6 Personenwagen und fünf Güterwagen. Das sind 86 Räder. Das reicht. Das Mädchen mit dem runden Bauch ist nicht mehr da, als der Zug mit seinen 86 Rädern vorbei ist. Sie ist einfach nicht mehr da. Kein bisschen, Kein einziges kleines bisschen ist mehr von ihr da. Sie hatte keine blaue Blume und keiner spielte mit ihr Skat. Und der liebe Gott hatte keinen Löffel für sie. Aber die Eisenbahn hatte die vielen schönen Räder. Wo wollte sie sonst auch hin? Was sollte sie sonst wohl tun? Denn der liebe Gott hatte nicht mal einen Löffel. Und nun ist von ihr nichts mehr über, gar nichts mehr über.²¹

The language has by this time become manneristic, the subject matter pathetic. Linguistic exaggeration to this degree is not common in Borchert's prose; usually he is able to match thematic simplicity and linguistic compactness in a more felicitous way. Nevertheless, Borchert's failures or near misses also have a certain significance in relation to theme.

Räder rollten ratternd unter rostroten Waggons.
Rasten rastlos rumpelnd davon--davon--davon.
Und viel ferner noch leise: davon--davon . . .²²

Hamburg!
Das ist mehr als ein Haufen Steine, Dächer, Fenster, Tapeten, Betten, Strassen, Brücken und Laternen. Das ist mehr als Fabrikschornsteine und Autogehupe--mehr als Möwengelächter, Strassenbahnschrei und das Donnern der Eisenbahnen--das ist mehr als Schiffsirenen, kreischende Kräne, Flüche und Tanzmusik--oh, das ist unendlich viel mehr.²³

It is precisely the "unendlich viel mehr" that Wolfgang Borchert

is trying to express. Of course it cannot be done by mere enumeration nor even by the most successful alliteration (which 'Räder rollten ratternd' is not). The desire to get beyond language, to express somehow the ineffable is not new to literature; one thinks of the German expressionists (and Borchert's affinity to that school is marked), one thinks of such American writers as Thomas Wolff and Walt Whitman. But seldom do we find a writer who is able to do as much with as limited a stock of themes and, despite a certain number of neologisms in the form of unexpected compounds, a basically modest vocabulary. His achievement is in this respect outstanding. To depict the urgency and fundamental simplicity of life in Germany after the war, as he himself lived it, he has transformed his language into a kind of mirror of his themes. If and when those themes become exhausted it will surely be Borchert's language, his ability to offer a lexical metaphor for the appalling simplicity and stark essentiality of life, that will grant him a second hearing.

NOTES

1. Wolfgang Borchert, Das Gesamtwerk, mit einem biographischen Nachwort von Bernhard Meyer-Marwitz (Hamburg, 1949), p. 408; hereafter cited as GW.
2. Adolf D. Klarmann, "Wolfgang Borchert: The Lost Voice of a New Germany," Germanic Review, XXVII, 2 (April, 1952), 108 ff.
3. GW, p. 389 (Meyer-Marwitz). A list of reviews, positive and negative, is given in Klarmann's article, 3-4.
4. Wilhelm Grenzmann, Dichtung und Glaube (Bonn, 1950), p. 307.
5. Klarmann, 109.
6. GW, p. 200.
7. In some stories, e. g., "Hamburg," "Das Brot," "Die Elbe," the war is not explicitly mentioned, but the moods of postwar Germany are present in equal measure here as well.
8. GW, p. 28.
9. GW, p. 326.
10. "Im Mai, Im Mai Schrie der Kuckuck," GW, p. 284.
11. GW, p. 300.
12. Klarmann, 114.
13. GW, p. 218.
14. "Im Mai . . .," GW, p. 292.
15. Klarmann, 119.
16. "Draussen," GW, p. 330.
17. GW, p. 332.
18. "Im Mai . . .," GW, p. 284.
19. "Die Stadt," GW, p. 91.
20. "Die Lange Lange Strasse Lang," GW, p. 312.
21. Loc. cit.
22. "Die Stadt," GW, p. 91.
23. "Hamburg," GW, p. 95.

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HUMOR IN NADAL-AWARD SPANISH NOVELS

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Only one of these prize novels contains much humor of the sort to leave the reader in a wholly happy frame of mind.¹ Significantly, this one novel, Siempre en capilla by Luisa Forrellad (Nadal Award 1953), has its setting outside of Spain in a past era: London in the 1890's. Some of the humor is undoubtedly unconscious and springs from the fact that the author, a Spanish woman, has chosen to relate the narrative in the first person as a young Englishman. A disregard for differences between English and Spanish ways of life leads to some amusing situations.

The English housekeeper exclaims, with true Spanish vehemence, "¡Se lo juro por mi madre! ¡Se lo juro por la luz de mis ojos!" (pp. 33-34)² when she is merely disclaiming responsibility for the whereabouts of a mislaid routine prescription about which she is not even being directly questioned. An English patient recovering from a serious illness trembles with emotion upon seeing a typically Spanish dish, "un enorme flan rodeado de natillas" (p. 188). English tenants, when the doctor removes objects indicative of superstition from their sick beds, "se persignaban" (p. 88). One of the most amusing slips is a reference to a Rumanian by the name of Moore (p. 159).

Although Siempre en capilla deals with man's struggle against poverty, disease, ignorance, and indifference, it is fundamentally an optimistic work in that the goodness of truly dedicated individuals--manifested in this particular novel by the development of a serum to combat diphtheria--has a favorable impact on society.

The novel does have some good-natured humor of a conscious sort. Alex, the young Irish doctor, is so tender-hearted that he keeps giving away his colleague's experimental animals. "Como de costumbre, Jasper [The colleague] se vería obligado a comprar otro conejo más feo, más arisco y, a ser posible, aburrido de la vida" (p. 12). On another occasion the same tender-hearted Alex, in attempting to console a patient at the hospital, has what he terms a horrible experience. The patient, whom Alex at first believes to be a young boy, proves to be a young lady, but he is so sorry for her, too, that he keeps right on embracing her. When his friend asks him what was so horrible about that, Alex replies, "Entró la monja" (p. 242).

Other examples of good-natured humor occur in the ability of the principal characters to laugh at themselves. One of them, Len Barker, has discovered a murdered woman. For a short time, while making his report to the police, he feels comfortably smug and proud of his sagacity. Then the inspector points out that Len's observations prove only that a certain individual was at the scene of

the crime, not that he committed it. "--Claro--balbucí--. Era la única posibilidad que no se me había ocurrido" (p. 44). On another occasion Len, who has treated a very important person, a Mr. Timmis, asks Jasper who Mr. Timmis is.

--; Pero, Len! ¿Es que no lo sabes?
Negué humillado.
--¿De veras, Len? ¡Qué plancha! ¡Si lo conoce
todo el mundo!
--Ya lo sé, pero yo no.
--; ¿No?!
--No.
Jasper se me acercó y bajó la voz:
--; Qué plancha, Len! ¡Confiaba en que tú me lo
dirías! ¡Yo tampoco sé nada de él y me da vergüenza pre-
guntarlo! (p. 249).

The other Nadal novels, more pessimistic in tone and more prone to consider man as a tragic or pathetic figure alone in a hostile or, at best, indifferent environment, offer relatively few examples of purely good-natured humor. In Dolores Medio's Nosotros los Rivero (Nadal Award 1952) there are a few cases of such humor. One has to do with the pre-Civil War Spanish girl's pretexts to get out of the house. The eldest Rivero daughter, Heidi,

Sentía necesidad de ir a Misa todas las mañanas, pero no a la Catedral o a San Tirso, como su madre y hermana. Heidi tenía gran devoción a la Virgen del Carmen y sus pasos se encaminaban a los Carmelitas, situados al otro lado del parque. Tía Mag decía sonriendo: --Es natural. . . "Santa Marfa Más Lejos" causa más devoción . . . (p. 92).

Another incident has to do with the youngest Rivero daughter's transition from child to young lady.

Y Lena se portó en aquella ocasión como una señorita. Sólo, naturalmente, mientras estuvo en presencia del señor Areval. Porque al salir del despacho y enfrentarse con el recto y empinado pasamanos, no pudo resistir a la tentación de deslizarse por él, como cordial despedida . . . Dió un salto, se encaramó sobre él, y a los cuatro segundos aterrizaba sobre un saco de cebada. Al levantarse, vió en lo alto de la escalera al señor Areval, que la despedía con la mano. Areval reía como un chiquillo . . . (p. 173).

Other examples of unbarbed humor, and there are very few of them, depend

on a play of words or on peculiarities of speech. In Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio's El Jarama (Nadal Award 1955) one of the young men on a Sunday outing with a group of young people is drinking too much wine. One of the girls warns him, "no se nos agüe la fiesta," and another of the group prevents an ill-tempered argument by remarking, "acaso la única cosa que tendríamos que aguar es el vino" (p. 38). In the same novel one of the women introduces her brother-in-law's wife as his exposa. "Decía exposa, con equis, como si ya no lo fuera" (p. 97). An American's efforts to converse in Spanish provide some amusement in La muerte le sienta bien a Villalobos by Francisco José Alcántara (Nadal Award 1954). The author spares us an imitation of what the conversation sounds like merely by describing the results:

El cura de Villalobos hacía verdaderos esfuerzos para no impacientarse cada vez que tenía que repetir, silabeándolas, todas sus palabras dos o tres veces a su colega norteamericano (p. 160).

Sonreía /el norteamericano/ siempre que el cura de Villalobos le dirigía la palabra, y siempre que encontraba invencibles dificultades para hacerse entender (p. 161).

The dearth of good-natured humor in these novels does not arise from the authors' lack of ability to make the reader laugh or smile. This they do, but usually in such a way that the reader feels sad or indignant as well as amused. There are numerous instances of humor of a mixed type: 1, humor based on comparatively innocent human frailties; 2, humor based on the pathetic; 3, humor based on the wry; 4, humor based on the picaresque; 5, humor based on childish non-conventional views of serious or sacred things; 6, humor based on satire, ridicule, or irony.

In the humor-based-on-foibles category, José Félix Tapia's La luna ha entrado en casa (Nadal Award 1945) speaks of the little boy ordered by his father to awaken him when the train reaches the stop next to their home town so that he can buy second-class tickets. They had made the rest of the trip in third, but the father, in reasonably comfortable circumstances, "No quería que en el pueblo supieran que gustaba de estas economías" (p. 55). Tía Mag in Nosotros los Rivero cannot bear to let the neighbors know how poor the family has become; when she goes marketing she stuffs her shopping bag with old rags to make it look nice and fat (p. 282). Jeannette, the daughter of a drunken transient in José María Gironella's Un hombre (Nadal Award 1946), when she becomes the mistress of a well-to-do man chooses a bath in a bathtub with hot and cold running water when he tells her she may have whatever she wishes (pp. 213-214). She continues to have a wonderful time by having countless photographs of herself made (p. 215). In El Jarama, the mayor of a little village tells his friends what he would do if he were able to live in Madrid: he would get a new suit, stroll along the Gran

Vía, have a tall beer with fried potatoes, and, as the grand climax, he would send for the bootblack and have him shine his shoes! One of his friends says that he was expecting that last touch: "No falla; es lo primero que se les ocurre a todos los que hablan de la buena vida: que venga un tío a limpiarles los zapatos" (p. 85). This remark, of course, could be taken in two ways. The ordinary man's ideas of luxury are very limited indeed, or what he really wants is to feel important by being able to order someone else around.

In the same general category of humor based on foibles there are some examples of the absurdity and inconsistency of human behavior. Juan Bausá, the principal character in Sobre las piedras grises by Sebastián Juan Arbó (Nadal Award 1948), harbors a fugitive in his home and experiences no fear whatsoever about the strong possibility of going to jail, but he is terrified at the thought of being late to work the next morning (p. 111). A drunk in José Suárez Carreño's Las últimas horas (Nadal Award 1949) extols the virtues and wonderful comprehension and sympathy of his "very great" friend, whose name he does not know (p. 121). When the revolutionary forces in the Oviedo uprising of 1934 are about to search the Rivero home, Lena decides to leave the holy pictures on the walls because in Spain they all, even the terrorists, have holy pictures around the house whether they pray to them or not (p. 310). Two Catalonians (in Un hombre) upon returning to Barcelona after a long absence are surprised at how much the people gesticulate as they talk. Before the evening is over one of them has occasion to say to the other, "¡Estás ya gesticulando como los demás!" (p. 345).

Humor based on the pathetic, inasmuch as most of these novels depict man as a forlorn and sorry creature, is quite common. Elena Quiroga's Viento del norte (Nadal Award 1950) describes a poor old woman whom the people believe to be a witch. They all avoid her like the plague, and the only way she can live at all is by threatening them with curses if they do not give her alms. When they give her something, she responds, "A virxe te bendiga, ~~¿~~ Suspiraba, avergonzada, la bruja" (p. 48). Lena Rivero, who had been a tomboy as a child, develops a normal adolescent girl's desire to be attractive, but her attempt to make herself more so by bobbing her hair boomerangs; a friend of her father jokingly told her "que era un muchacho, cuando se cortó las trenzas, por creerse ya una mujer, espoleando así su deseo de agradar a los hombres" (p. 196). Juan Bausá, singularly free of any marked political preferences, celebrates the inauguration of the Republic by drinking too much. His sensibilities, however, are touched by the idea of the King's having to leave his home. As Juan in his euphoric state staggers along a main Barcelona street, his compassion for the exiled King becomes so great that he begins shouting, "¡Viva el Rey!" The public, caught up in the fever of enthusiasm for the new Republic, is scandalized, and a policeman makes short shrift of Juan's inopportune huzzahs by knocking him out with a billy (pp. 185-191).

References to lottery tickets as the only possible means of escape from

the humdrum existence of modest employees are superficially amusing, but too close to the truth to be anything other than pathetic. The same Juan Bausá who was so overcome with compassion for the King had a constant struggle to make ends meet in supporting his wife and only daughter. From time to time he would buy a lottery ticket by snitching a little from his salary, always on the sly, and then spend a whole week dreaming about what he would do with the money won: he would bring home good food, wine, a toy for his little girl, everything that they had not had in his household for a long time, and he would keep taking large bills from his wallet, and he would tell his poor wife to hire a woman to help her around the house.

Ah, si Dios hubiese querido concederle aquella alegría! Con qué temblor desplegaba, el día del sorteo, el periódico, buscando los premios! A veces, era tanta su ansiedad, que llegaba incluso a ver el número de su billete en uno de los primeros premios. Pero, nada . . . "Quizá un premio pequeño. 'Le compraría unos zapatos a la niña, que los necesitaba." Nada. Luego andaba aturdido, sin tino, casi a punto de llorar, angustiado por las pesetas gastadas, que hacían falta en la casa, y por haber engañado a su mujer (p. 54).

A less poignant case of pinning one's hopes on luck in the lottery occurs in El Jarama. The group of young people, all employed in very ordinary jobs, on their Sunday outing talk about how much fun it would be to make a trip to Río de Janeiro or Bahía. One of them says that a trip to Astorga would be better. He could pay for that, in third-class naturally, and all the talk about the other more glamorous trips is just plain fantasy. One of the other boys remarks, seriously, "Despacio, Santos; yo tengo un décimo en casa. A lo mejor no es tan chiste para mí" (p. 127).

The sense of realism, traditional in Spanish literature, and the ability to laugh, or at least smile, at the minor annoyances of daily life makes itself felt occasionally in these novels in a type of humor based on a tongue-in-cheek distortion of commonly accepted values. In Las últimas horas one golfo informs another whom he has just cheated with marked cards, "Pareces tonto, como si fueras un señorito" (p. 84). Miguel Delibes' La sombra del ciprés es alargada (Nadal Award 1947) has a protagonist who remarks that the best remedy for rheumatism is some greater worry for the afflicted person (p. 133). The narrator of La luna ha entrado en casa says he cannot understand how his sister could be insane because in his family they always considered themselves to be normal, just as all psychotic persons do (p. 200). In attempting to induce Daniel of El Jarama to eat on the picnic, rather than to drink too much, his friend counsels him, "Ya sabemos que el vino es la base de la existencia, pero esto tampoco no hace daño a nadie. Si no se abusa, claro está. A ti no te dé asco, prueba un

poquito. Ya verás cómo te acostumbras poco a poco" (pp. 94-95).

In the same novel two Spanish officials driving along the highway are passed by a Chrysler. One of the officials comments that the Americans--who but Americans would be in a Chrysler?--will already have been in Madrid long enough to be bored with it by the time the Spaniards reach their own destination some sixteen kilometers outside of Madrid. The other official agrees, providing the Americans do not crack up first. "Ésta es la ventaja que tenemos nosotros; que con este cajoncito de pasas de Málaga no se corre peligro . . . Algún privilegio teníamos que tener" (p. 329).

Allusions to poverty are frequent, but for the most part they are made in a spirit of sadness or bitterness rather than in the humorous bravado of the picaresque tradition; nonetheless, there are a few picaresque incidents. One of the funniest of these occurs in Las últimas horas. Two older golfos talk, so as to be overheard intentionally, about wonderful black market prices for food, and in this manner attract the attention of a lad from the country. They manage to win his confidence and even warn him about the dangers of big-city life. He invites them to his room to see what he has to sell. Their intention is, of course, to cheat him, but the tables are turned when he catches them attempting to pick his pocket. He retrieves his own wallet, and the two golfos have nothing but assorted bumps and bruises to show for their efforts at making a dishonest dollar (pp. 185-188).

Another type of humor is based on a child's view of things or on the reactions of unconventional adults to serious or sacred concepts. In La frontera de Dios by José Luis Martín Descalzo (Nadal Award 1956), the main character, Renato, as a child makes friends with an old railroad guard whose job is to switch trains. One day, quite unexpectedly, the child asks:

--Tío Sopas, y cuando Vd. se muera, ¿quién dará el paso a los trenes?

--Hijo, esas preguntas nunca se las hagas a los viejos.

El niño se quedó preocupado. Y tras mucho pensarlo llegó a la conclusión de que el tío Sopas tenía miedo de que cuando él se muriera nadie sabría dar el paso y los trenes chocarían. Al día siguiente interrumpió al tío Sopas a media narración para decirle: --Tío Sopas, no te preocupes por los trenes. Yo les daré el cambio cuando tú te mueras (p. 42).

In the same novel a little girl asks the miracle-working Renato to revive her dead canary: "En el catecismo nos decían que Jesús resucitaba hombres. Pájaros es más fácil" (p. 32).

In La muerte le sienta bien a Villalobos there is a tavern keeper who

has not attended church in years. One day, because of an important death in the town, he enters the church and hears a sermon on hell. He is delighted with the sermon--the priest talked so frankly about so many sins you cannot ordinarily even mention around women (p. 253).

The old parish priest in La frontera de Dios, rejecting his young assistant's suggestion that they notify the Bishop of the mysterious happenings in Torre, which may be miracles, exclaims, "--Eso es lo último, hijo. Lo último que se hace. ¿No tenemos bastante complicación con Dios, para que encima metamos al obispo?" (p. 52). The editors of two rival newspapers which come out on alternate days react to Renato's miracles according to the way their newspapers are affected. The editor whose paper comes out on the day appropriate for getting the scoop is very pleased with God (p. 159). The other editor whose paper loses out on the big news offers this explanation: "Ya podía hacer Dios los milagros en lunes, miércoles o viernes. Parece que don Cayetano /The rival editor/ tuviera contrato con la Providencia. Y yo soy tan cristiano como él" (p. 169). Renato himself, although he never loses his love for God, thinks He must be playing jokes on him, for the miracles are not of the sort to bring practical benefits to the town.

Renato, con los ojos levantados y la sonrisa en los labios, dijo: "Menos mal. Hoy no me jugaste ninguna" (p. 170).

Decididamente, Dios le tomaba el pelo (p. 126).

Levantó la cabeza al cielo y sonrió. "No vuelvan a ocurrírsete estas bromas," pensó (p. 64).

Renato finally decides that the people, who want rain very badly, have created a God as little as their heads. "Un Dios fontanero, eso es lo que han hecho de Ti. Sólo te llaman cuando hay algo que reparar. Cuando los grifos del cielo se estropean" (p. 166). Such passages, especially out of context, could conceivably convey the idea of sacrilege, but that this is not their intent is abundantly clear when they are read as an integral part of the novel. Spaniards seem to be on more familiar speaking terms with God and the saints than are most Americans.

The most fecund sort of humor in these novels is based on satire, irony, or ridicule of varying degrees of intensity. All of La muerte le sienta bien a Villalobos is a satire aimed at the shallowness and hypocrisy of a small town. A major portion of La frontera de Dios, written by a priest, satirizes the lack of a truly Christian spirit. All of the novels dealing with Spain, to a greater or lesser extent, gibe at some aspect of Spanish life. A young student in La luna ha entrado en casa is advised by his teacher to stick to the tried and true. "Ensayá el soneto, las quintillas para la cosa festiva. No sé cómo os gustan esos modernismos que nadie los entiende" (p. 38). In the same novel, a sarcastic

remark about the "military" objectives in bombings is inserted in a discussion of the moon:

En los pueblos, es donde más se echa de menos a la Luna--acaso por la falta de luz eléctrica. Únicamente les es perjudicial en las guerras, cuando con su insolente persistencia los delata ante la aviación mostrando sus objetivos como el campanario, la casa Consistorial, el campo de fútbol (p. 18).

Gossip is a frequent topic. The tertulia of the Rivero family becomes bored very quickly when discussing the good deeds of the quiet daughter; it is much more fun to talk about the frivolous daughter. Finally, almost as if impelled by the gossip, the girl does run away from home (pp. 80, 92). In Villalobos everyone always speaks of "el hijo de la sacristana (nadie le llamaba hijo del sacristán, por respeto a la verdad, y era ésta la única verdad que se respetaba en Villalobos)" (p. 47).

An excessive desire for money is ridiculed fairly frequently. The old priest in La frontera de Dios says that if Judas Iscariot had been dealing with us instead of with Christ, he would probably have done all right, become a banker or something of the sort, and been interred with a good Christian obituary notice (p. 48). The mayor of Villalobos, who was hoping the town would inherit something from its richest inhabitant, cannot force himself to believe that she has died. "¿Qué dices, animal? ¿La señora no ha podido morir sin decir nada!" (p. 27). The village priest, who was cherishing the same hope for the parish, is no less upset by the news of the death. And, as his housekeeper explains, why wouldn't he be, "¿Con los cuartos que hay por medio!" (p. 30)? In order to comply with the terms of the rich old woman's will the Mayor has to attend religious services. He fears that his irreligious friends will die laughing, but, after all, wheat is wheat. He is not entirely right, however, in predicting his friends' reaction: "El Tuerto y don Nando [his friends], que sabían más historia de Francia que el alcalde de Villalobos, hubieran asegurado con una sonrisa de satisfacción que el grano de doña Paula bien valía una novena de vez en cuando" (p. 228). Indifference to political changes, provided they do not interfere with the individual's own self-interest, is pointed out through the case of the changing photographs. The newspaper office of Don Cayetano in La frontera de Dios has a large picture of the Battle of Waterloo on the wall. The only thing remarkable about it is that it is obviously replacing another still larger picture judging by the condition of the wall.

Y así fué. Era una hermosa fotografía de la boda de Alfonso XIII. A éste sucedió un cuadro del general Primo de Rivera. Luego, cuando la República, don Cayetano, cansado de cambios, se decidió por la batalla de Waterloo, que era mucho menos comprometida y no estaba expuesta

a cambios políticos. Porque a don Cayetano--y se podría decir que lo mismo a toda Irola--le interesa poco la política. Con tal de que La Voz pueda seguir alimentando las siete bocas de sus siete rapaces, igual le da un régimen que otro. Comunismo, no; eso, no. No sabe demasiado claramente lo que es, pero lo identifica con el dominio de los carasucias. Algo parecido piensan todos los habitantes de Irola, menos los carasucias de las barriadas, claro está (p. 158).

The Mayor of Villalobos thinks along the same line with respect to pictures of political figures. He has one in his office, of one of "los que ya habían perdido eficacia en la provincia y no podían comprometer a nadie" (p. 88).

The belief that people in politics, or those aspiring to be, are primarily interested in furthering only their own ends gives rise to a considerable amount of sarcasm. Lena Rivero did not know then that every self-respecting mayor has to "demostrar su celo por las obras públicas, aunque sea desempedrando una calle para volver a empedrarla bajo su mandato" (p. 125). Juan Bausá did not know that "se daban mítines en los grandes locales de la ciudad, donde derechas e izquierdas vociferaban y prometían la salvación en nombre de un ideal político, que era siempre el mejor" (p. 67). In Juan's office, after a change in government, new officials, especially minor ones, rush about as though they had the recipe for immortality or the salvation of humanity in their hands, whereas all they have in reality is that of their own families, "y el hombre, sea del partido que sea, así que tiene espectadores, se siente inevitablemente con aptitudes de comediante" (p. 233).

Carmen Laforet's Nada, the first of the Nadal Award novels (1944), may have helped to set the tone for the subsequent relatively humorless novels, for Nada contains only one really amusing incident. Andrea, the eighteen-year-old narrator, meets a group of young people who like to play at leading a Bohemian life, although some of them come from well-to-do families. One of these boys, Gaspar, exasperates his father by spending in two weeks' time the two thousand pesetas which his father had given him for Christmas. When the father asks what he did with it, Gaspar cannot account for much of the money, so he says he lent what he had left to his friend López Soler. The father is indignant and makes Gaspar get the money back. In order to do so Gaspar and his older brother take a sleeper from Barcelona to Madrid. Gaspar recovers the money, the whole twenty-five pesetas which he had lent to López (pp. 106-107).

Carmen Laforet was only twenty-three years old when Nada was published. Many of the other authors also were young when they wrote their novels, and young people frequently lack the perspective necessary to thinking along humorous lines, but the principal reason for the dearth of mellow humor in

these novels may well be that for a long time Spaniards have not had much to laugh at in their lives.

NOTES

1. The Nadal Award, inaugurated in 1944 by the Barcelona publication Destino, is considered to be one of the most important literary awards a novel can be accorded in Spain. For a discussion of the history of the Award, see William J. Grupp, "The Influence of the Premio Nadal on Spanish Letters," Kentucky Foreign Language Quarterly, III, 4 (1946), pp. 162-168.
2. Page references are to Ediciones Destino editions except in the case of Nada, where they refer to the Oxford University Press edition of 1958.

TRADITIONAL MOTIFS IN THE CAITHRÉIM THOIRDHEALBHAIGH

By Leo F. McNamara, University of Michigan

The Caithréim Thoirdealbhaigh, or Triumphs of Turlough, is a medieval Irish historical saga.¹ The work was composed in the fourteenth century, very probably in 1359, by Sean MacRuaidhri MacCraith, who is represented as the son of the poet Ruadhri mentioned as an actor and eyewitness in the events described in the narrative.² The events upon which the work is founded concern warfare between two branches of the O'Brien and the Norman de Clare. The substantial historical authenticity of the Caithréim is, I think, beyond question. The English State Papers and the Irish Annals for the period together support this claim.

The Caithréim is not, however, a mere chronicle of events. It is a historical saga. The author has clearly taken pains to shape his material in line with a definite aesthetic design, to render a celebration of the victories of Turlough More O'Brien and the further victories of his sons and adherents. Without departing from the historical facts, he introduces into his work a number of more or less familiar traditional rhetorical devices in order to achieve this aesthetic aim. It is my intention to make a general survey of the principal rhetorical devices and motifs. These include such matters as the style of the prose narrative, the nature of the interspersed metrical pieces, allusions for comparison with previous legendary and historical characters and events, references to the occurrence of omens and apparitions, and utterances of prophecy.

The main body of the Caithréim is written in a prose characterized by frequent alliteration--often rather long alliterative runs--and much attention to description. Details of topography and the scenes of battle receive particularly lavish treatment by the author, who also provides lengthy descriptions of the physical appearance of the actors in his narrative. It is immediately obvious from the style of the prose that the writer intends his audience to associate his narrative with other historical and/or legendary celebrations of martial exploits. The Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh³ may be mentioned in this connection, as may also In Cath Cathardha,⁴ the Irish translation of Lucan's Bellum Civile. As Flower points out in his introduction to O'Grady's edition,⁵ MacCraith "here and there obviously imitates" The War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill, and the author refers to Lucan's work and imitates Lucan's title when he calls the strife of the O'Brien's a cath cathardha, a "civil war."

The Caithréim contains seventy-one metrical pieces, ranging from single quatrains to poems of more than nine or ten quatrains, with one piece (which contains a record of a battle) of fifty-two quatrains. The author of the

Caithréim attributes these poems not to himself but rather to the poet Ruadhri--presumably his father--and to other participants in the events he is recounting: e. g., Turlough himself is represented as making and reciting certain poems before or after battle, as are other chiefs, Donnall and Murtough and Dermot O'Brien, and Cumea and Lochlainn MacConmara, among others. These poems are of several kinds and are inserted in the prose narration in appropriate places, according to their character.

Among these poems, written in various meters and including some of the earlier rhythmic-alliterative type, we can discover several classes. About a score of them may be called elegiac poems, lamentations upon the death (usually in battle) of a chief or other notable person; these are usually debide and are, as a rule, introduced as having been composed upon the occasion by the poet Ruadhri. Such, for example, is the poem that records the death of Sheeda MacConmara and begins:

Alas for pleasant Sheeda, whom in battle
No man e'er withstood successfully;
Munster's hosts never made head against the spear,
bright and happy thy fortune always was.⁶

These poems often contain the working-out of a complex metaphor, as does the poem on the death of Lochlainn O'Dea that begins: "Defective the Dalcassian's chessboard is, / a man of the blue-weaponed set is wanting . . ."⁷

It is worth noting at this point that there are several instances in these lamentations of the well-known motif of the land's declining consequent on the death of a chief, the Waste Land motif familiar in the Grail literature and early romance. In the poem on the death of Donnall MacTaidgh O'Brien, for instance, we read in the third and fourth quatrains:

By his murder the sun is turned to red,
and every profitable mountain is withered;
every moist spot, even as far as the sea,
the clear clean wind has parched.

Supply of fish and corn is ebbd away,
the water-meadow has drowned her fruitfulness;
treachery enjoys a rich booty,
and our battalions' hardihood is perished.⁸

It may here be mentioned that we find in the prose narrative the converse of this motif, i. e., the citation of natural abundance as proof of the righteousness and value of a good king's reign. One of the constant themes of the early part of the Caithréim is the author's claim that Turlough More should

have been king over all Ireland. He says that Turlough's goodly reign in Thomond attests this.

For Turlough the sun put on a brighter and newly burnished face; the firmament for him unveiled a visage freshly beautified. At news that Turlough was made lord of all, the wild rude wind of hoarse and inarticulate utterance hied him back swiftly to his sleepinghouse; the sea left her loud booming, stilled her raving noise, out of her skirts extruding on the shores that held her the fish in shoals, until all strands were filled with this her produce so cast up. In Turlough's favor the kindly fruitful woods, conceiving and bringing forth abundantly, grew variegated; and the men of this our Ireland in general participated in the copious blessings which, at his accession, by operation of the elements and of benignant planets were showered upon Turlough. In a word, but that the over-sea folk were in the way to hinder him of becoming monarch, the Irish were well inclined to have had him for their noble head to wield their irachts.⁹

Of the many analogues one may be instanced here. In the Book of Leinster account of the foundation of Emain Macha, we find that "abundance of fruit every year" is given as among the evidences that guarantee the righteousness of a sovereign's reign.¹⁰

These elegies, as has been said, are represented as having been composed and recited at the time of the death of the men they lament. In another class we find a number of poems in praise of certain men, poems made immediately after some notable triumph in battle or on a raid; also there are poems in general celebration of a victory. The latter characteristically make mention of the principal participants and eulogize their efforts. Written in various meters, they are, like the laments, attributed to the poet contemporary with the events.

A third group of poems are those that may be called incitatory; they are exhortations to battle and have a kind of incantatory quality. Unlike the poems mentioned above, these are often rhythmic-alliterative and are sometimes put into the mouths of the chiefs who are leading the host into battle. These poems seem designed to excite the martial spirit.

Another group of poems recited before battle purport to be prophetic utterances and foretell victory for the host: they are spoken sometimes by the poet, sometimes by the chiefs. One particular instance of this, which involves a traditional motif, is Maccon MacConmara's announcement: "I am a prophet that is endowed with genuine science." He prophesies which of the enemy shall fall and backs this up by saying, "In the hour of onset a chief utters truth only; as Meave, the 'half-red' /Medb Lethderg/ said to Cahir More her spbuse: 'Announce that which is pleasant, / persevere to declare all that is most favourable; / for every true prince is a prophet too' "¹¹ Turlough More, Murtough's father, has on a previous occasion apparently at one and the same time alluded to and rejected this non-Christian tradition. Before one of the interminable battles against clan Brian Rua we read this:

With resolute purpose they set on and, zeal
of faith prompting Turlough, as he "moved
his foot" /took the first step/ he pronounced
to them this quatrain: "Attempt ye not
prediction of the lips; / neither in curved
/I. e., new/ moon's omen nor in presage of
soothsayer put your trust; / but me, the
God of Heaven, obey, / for in the would-be
prophets nought but falseness shall be found."¹²

Finally we have, in addition to a few other pieces to be discussed later, a group of poems that celebrate the inauguration of a new chief. These various kinds of poems, -- laments, triumphs, records of battle, exhortations, prophecies, and inauguration poems -- are said by the author of the Caithréim to be compositions deriving from the time of the events his work recounts and to have been composed by participants in those happenings. His insertion of them at appropriate places in the narrative helps to shape the chronicle into a saga.

Since these poems are often so full of information that is reflected in the prose, it might be thought that the author of the Caithréim derived all his information from these poems and so constructed his narrative exclusively from them. Such is not the case, however. Close examination reveals that though the narrative never contradicts the records of the poems, there is more historically sound matter in the prose than could have been derived from the poems. The author speaks of having access to certain records of the time; these are presumably records, whether in prose or verse, additional to the poems he includes.

The interspersing of poems in the prose narrative, then, is one device by which the author of the Caithréim forms a saga from the records of recent history. Turning now to some of his other devices, I should like first to make brief mention of one of these -- allusions to personages and events of classical

and Irish myth, legend, and history. The author's aim is to exalt the heroes and events of which he tells by bringing them into relation and giving them comparable status with these traditional figures and events. For example, Murtough O'Brien who, after his father Turlough, is the central figure of the saga, is in one place described as "the Irish Hector, the Hercules of noble achievements, the solid-weaponed Achilles, the well-tented Pyrrhus, the unique hero of this age, without his peer among the Irish" ¹³ So also in one poem Murtough is described as victorious and battle-strong, one who hides the fame of the Red Branch. ¹⁴ In the lament-poems already mentioned, the familiar figure of the "widowed" Emania or Tara weeping in her bereavement is employed in eulogy of the dead chief--a Tara doubly bereft, one might say, in that she was deprived of his sovereign kingship while he was alive, and now she is as if widowed by his death. The great gathering and climax of this group of motifs occurs in the poem which the beautiful maiden who announces herself as the "Sovereignty of Ireland" sings to Turlough More when she is presented as appearing to him. I return to this apparition and this poem at the conclusion of my paper.

To continue this present discussion of the author's technique of allusion to the legendary or historic past, let me give one outstanding instance of comparison with Irish history. At the conclusion of the important battle at Corcumroe Abbey in 1317, the author speaks of this decisive victory as making "the third summit of high emprise" achieved by the "far-westerns" since the arrival of the Gael from "blue Spain's rugged coasts." He goes on to explain that the first of these triumphs took place at Clontarf when the Dalcassians rose up from apparent defeat and overcame the Danes. The second victory was when on their return from Clontarf the weakened host under Brian's son Donough smashed the men of Ossory. Now this present battle of the Abbey, says the author, makes the third of "three pinnacles of renown." ¹⁵

One may perceive, I think, in this grouping of three battles another traditional motif, that of the triad, and we may pass on from these instances of comparison with classical and native legend and history to another example of the triad motif. We have in this an additional method used by the author to give aesthetic shape to his narrative. At the time of Turlough's death (which occurs, by the way, when scarcely one-quarter of the complete saga has run its course), the author says that "the chief's special, well-fenced, all-abundant, serene and goodly structures that he raised for himself were three." These are then described: first, his regal residence at Clonroad; second, the monastery he built at Ennis, "a blessed and enduring monument"; third, "Heaven's own refulgent holy mansion . . . he won: in which he, secure at rest, continues until Doom . . . when he will revisit Earth to fetch his body to the heavenly City" ¹⁶

The idea of prophecy has already been mentioned in connection with certain of the poems recited by the poet, and sometimes the chiefs, before

battle. This element is also present in the prose section of the Caithréim. Omens familiar to us from earlier Irish literature are asserted to have been heard one night before battle. Mysterious sounds were heard, lights of the fairy forts flashed in the night, the Four Waves "rose together and in unison aloud expressed their groans," and that night "men saw three shades, and heard three feeble long-drawn wails, lamentable, low and sadly sweet."¹⁷ These are, of course, omens of evil, and the roaring of the waves, in particular, presages danger to the king. So it is that on the morrow the supreme chief Donough, Turlough's son, is taken and slain by treachery. This slaying is, as are all the substantial historic facts, attested by the Annals; ¹⁸ the omens belong to tradition.

Prophecy in another traditional form is encountered in the next motif to be considered. Twice in this saga there appears the well-known Washer at the Ford, the Badb or Morrigan, who washes bloody garments in a stream and foretells of calamity and defeat in battle. Analogues are well known: I need cite only the apparition of the Badb to Cormac Conloinges in Togail Bruidne da Choca, The Destruction of Da Choca's Hostel,¹⁹ and her appearance to Cuchullain in the Great Defeat on the Plain of Muirthemne.²⁰ The appearance of the figure varies--she is a "red woman" in the Togail Bruidne da Choca and appears to Cuchullain as a fair, yellow-haired maiden--but her actions and their meaning are substantially the same.²¹ In the Caithréim Thoirdhealbhaigh she appears as a very horrific hag indeed, the author lavishing multiple compound alliterating epithets to produce a picture of striking repulsiveness. He localizes her for his account by having her announce herself as "the Dismal of Burren." She appears twice: the first time to clan Brian Rua (that is, the branch inimical to the author's party), and the second time to the enemy Norman de Clare. Both times her prophecy of defeat and death is fulfilled. There is a curious variation in the present version which has no parallel in the examples cited and which sounds like a folk motif. Both men to whom she appears refuse to recognize their doom and, using strange logic, attempt to draw encouragement rather than despair from the occurrence. De Clare says that she is a "well-wisher" of his enemy, sent out to frighten him. Donough MacBriain Ruaidh goes further: surveying her monstrous features, he concludes that she must be a "warlock leman" of his enemy Murtough sent to turn him away, and this he takes to be a sign of Murtough's dread, so he is encouraged. This whistling past the graveyard does neither of them any good; Donough and de Clare are defeated in battle.

One other supernatural apparition, already mentioned, is my last instance of traditional motif. It has been said that the author of the Caithréim dwells upon his claim that Turlough should rightfully have been accepted as high-king. When it is evident that in spite of Turlough's martial triumphs this is not to be, he has appear to him the well-known maiden, the allegorical "Sovereignty of Ireland." She comes not, as she sometimes does, as a loathly

lady (as in her appearance to Niall of the Nine Hostages²²), but rather as a beautiful maiden, love-striking. She approaches Turlough and laments the fact that but for the presence and force of the foreigners, Ireland's sovereignty would have been his.²³ Before she vanishes, she sings a song lamenting that she is not his. I should like to quote it in part in O'Grady's translation, because it sums up a good many of the traditional motifs under discussion.

Turlough, that is Teigue's son and "O'Brien" most honorable,
he is Tara's choice: chief of red-sworded Cashel,
darling of Taillte with the green slopes,
own stripling of Usnach of the golden goblets,
fosterling of Ellach marked by terrible deeds,
the mark of noble Emania's glances.
For him, Conn's Cruachan contends with
all the other brilliant-blushing queens; . . .
In their green havens the Waves
have thundered for their royal chief:
thick-flanked heavy wave of Ballintoy;
Cleena's spray-showering wave;
wave of the inver's fish-full tide-race.
Woe to him that has procured the sweetheart of all these,
before he works out Ireland's salvation, to turn back!
"Sovereignty" with the twining twisted locks am I:
woe to him that has robbed me of my gentle lover,
of Turlough, man of deadly prowess!²⁴

In this paper I have tried to survey some of the methods by which the author of the Caithréim used the events of recent history to write a saga. In his building upon a solid historical foundation, we can see tradition operating in such elements as the style of the prose, the varieties of intermixed poetry, allusions to classical and Irish history and legend, triadic grouping, references to omens and prophecy, and the appearance of the familiar figures of the Washer at the Ford and the Sovereignty of Ireland. These traditional motifs work together to form an historical saga, the Caithréim Thoirdealbhaigh.

NOTES

1. Irish Texts Society, XXVI, XXVII (London, 1929).
Cited hereafter as Caith. Thoir. i (text) and ii (translation).
2. Caith. Thoir. i, 1; ii, 1. There is reason to believe that the date traditionally given, 1459, is exactly one century too late.
3. The War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill, or The Invasions of Ireland by the Danes and Other Norsemen, ed. and trans. Rev. James H. Todd, Rolls Series (London, 1867).
4. Ed. and trans. Standish Hayes O'Grady; published as Appendix in

5. Caith. Thoir. i, ii.
6. Ibid., p. XIV.
7. Caith. Thoir. ii, 131.
8. Ibid., ii, 140.
9. Ibid., ii, 132.
10. Ibid., ii, 25.
11. Cited in Eugene O'Curry, Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History (Dublin, 1861), p. 528.
12. Caith. Thoir. ii, 89.
13. Ibid. ii, 21.
14. Ibid., ii, 62.
15. Ibid., ii, 146.
16. Ibid., ii, 111-112.
17. Ibid., ii, 32.
18. Ibid., ii, 45-46.
19. See The Annals of Inisfallen, ed. Seán Mac Airt (Dublin, 1951), p. 407; The Annals of Connacht, ed. A. Martin Freeman (Dublin, 1944), p. 227.
20. Whitley Stokes, ed. and trans., "Da Choca's Hostel," Revue Celtique, xxi, 157.
21. Eleanor Hull, The Cuchullin Saga in Irish Literature (London, 1898), p. 247.
22. Gertrude Schoepperle gives a general account of this figure in "The Washer at the Ford," JEGP, xviii (1919), 60-66.
23. Cited in Myles Dillon, Cycles of the Kings (London, 1946), p. 40.
24. Caith. Thoir., ii, 29.
25. Ibid., ii, 133.

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NATURE IN THE OLD PORTUGUESE LYRIC

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Nearly all the lyric poetry in medieval Portuguese falls into two groups, the Cantigas de Amor and the Cantigas de Amigo. The Cantigas de Amor are courtly lyrics, somewhat artificial, in which the influence of Provençal poetry can clearly be seen. Poets praise their ladies, indulge in debates on questions of love, and complain of their sufferings. The Cantigas de Amigo, on the other hand, are an expression of popular lyricism and are often based on songs of the country people. In these poems the important theme is that of the girl in love. The poet speaks as if he himself were the maiden, sighing for her lover who is at war or on the sea, planning a pilgrimage where she hopes she will see her amigo, complaining that her mother keeps too strict a watch over her, or confiding her love secrets to a friend.

One would scarcely expect to find Nature occupying an important place in the Cantigas de Amor. The poet's thoughts turn exclusively to his lady, source of all his joys and sufferings. The exclusion of Nature from this sort of poetry has been explained by M. Rodrigues Lapa, who says that "O artista galego-português, arrastado nos tumultos do coração, não tem olhos para disfrutar serenamente a natureza exterior: ninguém aprecia o encanto das flores com os olhos embaciados de lágrimas."¹

Lapa goes on to define the Cantiga de Amor as "o primeiro produto romântico da literatura portuguesa"² and lists the various characteristics of this poetry: sadness, faithful passion, the sweetness of the torment of love, tears, and death--everything but Nature. "Só faltou a esse primeiro romantismo o elemento da paisagem como reflexo de estados de alma."³

There are, to be sure, occasional references to Nature in the Cantigas de Amor. A short poem by Airas Nunes is full of the pleasures of summer:

Que muyto m' eu pago deste uerão,
por estes rramos e por estas flores
et polas aues que cantã d' amores,
por que ando hy led' e sen cuydado
et asy faz tod' omẽ namorado,
senpre y anda led' e muy loução.

Cand' eu passo per algũas ribeyras,
so boas aruores, per boõs prados
se cantã hy passaros namorados.

He ends his poem with the lines: "Ey eu gra uiç' e grad' alegria, / quando mh'as aues cãtã no estyo."⁴

Paay Gomes Charinho, who was an admiral of Castile as well as a poet, makes a couple of allusions to the sea, but does not describe its beauties. In one poem,⁵ he remarks that the sufferings of love make him forget his fear of the sea, while in another⁶ he compares the sea, with its power, to the king of Castile and Leon. Ruy Fernandes also mentions the sea, which reminds him of the anguish caused by love:

Quand' eu ueio las ondas
e las muyt' altas ribas
logo mi ueen ondas
al cor pola uelyda:
maldicto seja l' mare
que mi faz tanto male!⁷

It is to the Cantigas de Amigo, closer to the soil, that one must turn to find references to Nature. Although love is still the main theme, Nature has its part to play, either as the setting for the love story or as the confidante to whom the girl tells her frequently-sad story. Four aspects of Nature are predominant: water, trees, the deer of the hills, and birds.

Several poems are centered around fountains, natural meeting places for lovers, since the girl has a perfectly good excuse for leaving the house when she must go to the fountain to wash her clothes. Pero Meogo combines the fountain and deer of the hills themes in a poem which tells of a girl scolded by her mother for lingering at the fountain. The maiden's excuse is that the deer have disturbed the water:

"Digades, filha, mha filha louçana,
por que tardastes na fria fontana?"

"Tardei, mha madre, na fõtana fria,
ceruos do monte a augua voluiã."

To which the mother replies: "Mentir, mha filha, mentir por amigo, / nunca ui ceruo que uoluesse o rio."⁸

The deer and fountain turn up in the little refrain of another poem by Pero Meogo, in which the mother reproaches her daughter for tearing her dress at a dance:

Fostes, filha, eno baylar
e ronpestes hi o brial,

poys o ceruo y uẽ
esta fonte seguide-a bẽ
pois o ceruo y uẽ.

Fostes, filha, eno loyr
e rompestes hi o uestir
poy lo ceruo hy uen
esta fonte seguide-a bẽ,
pois o ceruo y uẽ.⁹

In still another of Pero Meogo's lyrics, the girl meets her lover while washing her hair:

Vay lauar cabelos
na fria fontana,
passa seu amigo
que a muit' ama,
leda dos amores,
dos amores leda.

Again, the deer disturbs the water. The poet leaves it to his audience to guess whether the girl will use this as an excuse for a long absence:

Passa seu amigo
que ãhi bẽ quẽria,
o ceruo do môte
a augua uoluya,
leda dos amores,
dos amores leda.¹⁰

A poem by Joan Soares Coelho¹¹ shows a girl on better terms with her mother. She has gone to the fountain to wash her hair and clothes. There she finds her amigo. She joyfully tells her mother about this little adventure. Dom Dinis, the poet-king, introduces the fountain in a beautiful poem which, for a change, contains no love story but does show us a very human touch.¹² The wind carries off the clothes which the girl has washed and the maiden is furious.

The river and the sea, with the vessels that travel on the waves, occur in a number of poems. Often, the amigo is going off to sea in the king's service, leaving the girl behind. Joan Zorro, author of several sea-poems, writes:

Mete el rey barquas no rio forte;
quẽ amigo ha que Deus lho amostre;
ala uay, madre, ond' ey suydade.

Mete el rey barquas na Estremadura;
quẽ amigo a que Deus lho aduga;
ala uay, madre, ond' ey suydade.¹³

The poet Meendinho portrays a girl watching the waves from a hermitage, which she has no doubt visited to pray for the safety of her lover on the sea:

Sedia m' eu na ermida de Sã Simhõ
e cercaron mh' as ondas; que grandes son!
Eu atendendo meu amigo,
eu atendendo meu amigo! ¹⁴

A short but beautiful poem by Martin Codax, another poet whose favorite theme is the sea, shows the girl asking the waves why her lover is away so long. This is one of several Cantigas de Amigo in which Nature is not merely the background for the story, but a friend to whom the girl relates her sorrows:

Ay ondas que eu uin ueer,
se mi saberedes dizer
por que tarda meu amigo
sen mi?

Ay ondas que eu uin mirar,
se mi saberedes contar
por que tarda meu amigo
sen mi? ¹⁵

At times, the story indicates that the amigo must be in port.

Martin Codas writes of a girl who invites her mother and sister to accompany her to Vigo, where they can watch the waves and meet the young man:

Mha irmana fremosa, treides de grado
a la igreia de Uigo, hu é o mar leuado,
e miraremo' las ondas.

A la jgreia de Uigo, hu é o mar salido
e uerra hy, madre, o meu amigo,
e miraremo' las ondas. ¹⁶

Nuno Fernandes Torneol, writing in a sadder spirit, tells of a girl who goes to the shore to wait for the boats to come in, but the lover is not there:

Vy eu, mha madr', andar
as barcas eno mar,
e moyro-me d' amor!

Foy eu, madre, veer
as barcas eno ler,
e moyro-me d' amor!

E foi las aguardar,
e non o pud' achar,
e moyro-me d' amor!

E foi las atender
e non o pudi ueer,
e moyro-me d' amor!¹⁷

Trees occur in several poems, but only two or three varieties are mentioned: the pine, the hazel, the pomegranate. A girl in a poem by Pero Gonçalves loses a ring under a pine:

O anel do meu amigo
perdi-o sso lo uerde pino
e chor' eu, bela.

O anel do meu amado
perdi-o sso lo uerde ramo,
e chor' eu, bela.¹⁸

One of the best-known poems, the creation of Dom Dinis, introduces the flowers of the pine--a curious expression, since pines do not bear what one generally thinks of as flowers--as the confidante. Here we have a little dialogue, in which the girl asks for news of her absent and faithless lover:

Ay flores, ay flores do uerde pyno,
se sabedes nouas do meu amigo!
Ay Deus, e hu é?

Se sabedes nouas do meu amigo
aquele que m'eti do que mh' a iurado?
Ay Deus, e hu é?

To which the tree answers:

Vos me preguntades polo uoss' amado,
e eu bẽ uos digo que é uiu' e sano.

E eu bẽ uos digo que é san' e uyuo,
e seera uosco ant' o prazo saydo.¹⁹

Dom Dinis makes use of the frol do pinho in another poem, a gay little lyric that begins:

Amad' e meu amigo,
ualha Deus!
Uede la frol do pinho
e guisade d' andar.

Amigu' e meu amado,
ualha Deus!
Uede la frol do ramo
e guisade d' andar.²⁰

Nuno Fernandes Torneol has a poem which shows a girl, sad because she cannot be with her lover, sitting under the hazel tree, which is mentioned in a little refrain:

Que coyta tamanha ey a soffrer
por amar amigu' e non o ueer!
e pousarey so lo auelanal.

Que coyta tamanha ey endurar
por amar amigu' e ño lhi falar!
e pousarey so lo auelanal.²¹

The hazel turns up again in a more cheerful poem, a bailada, or poem composed to accompany a dance, by Airas Nunes. Here a girl urges her pretty companions to dance under the trees:

Baylemos nos ia todas tres, ay amigas,
so aquestas auelaneyras floridas,
e quẽ for uelida como nos, uelidas,
se amigo amar,
so aquestas auelaneyras frolidas
uerra baylar.²²

Another bailada by Airas Nunes, this time in the form of a dialogue between the girl and her mother, shows the mother urging her daughter to dance for her lover under the pomegranate: "Por Deus, ay mha filha, fazed' a baylada/ ant' o uoss amigo, de so a milgranada."²³

There are several poems which introduce birds. Fernando Esguio tells of a girl who invites her sister to visit the lake where the lover had gone to hunt birds. The amigo's somewhat destructive attitude toward Nature is mitigated by his humane feeling toward songbirds:

Vayamos, irmana, uayamos dormir
en nas rrybas do lago hu eu andar uy
a las aues meu amigo.

En nas rribas do loago hu eu ui andar
seu arco na mano a las aues tirar,
a las aues meu amigo.

Seu arco na mano as aues ferir;
a las que cantauam leixa-las guarir,
a las aues meu amigo.²⁴

Nuno Fernandes Torneol has an alba, or dawn song, with birds singing of love:

Leuad', amigo, que dormides as manhanas frias:
todalas aues do mundo d' amor dizian,
leda mh' and' eu.

Leuad', amigo, que dormide' las frias manhanas:
todalas aues do mûdo d' amor cãtauã,
leda m' and' eu.²⁵

A most curious reference to birds turns up in a dialogue poem by Estevan Coelho. A girl sits spinning and singing. A man tells her that he knows that she must be in love, because she is singing so well:

Sedia la fremosa seu sirgo laurãdo,
sa uoz mãsselinha fremoso cantando
cantigas d' amigo.

"Par Deus de Cruz, dona, sey eu que ãdades
d' amor muy coyhada, que tan ben cantades
cantigas d' amigo."

The maiden's answer, in startling contrast to the lyric mood of the poem, is that her questioner has eaten vulture. According to a superstition of the times, eating the flesh of a vulture enabled one to read another's mind or to foretell the future: "Auuytor comestes, que adeuynhades."²⁶

It is among the pastorelas, that is, poems dealing with shepherdesses and their loves, that one finds some of the most beautiful descriptions of Nature, with several of her aspects appearing at times in the same poem. One lyric by Airas Nunes, although written according to the Provençal models, contains several elements of popular verse, with references to the flowering branch, to the starling in the hazel tree, and to the banks of the stream:

So lo rramo uerde frolido
uodas fazen a meu amigo,
e choran olhos d' amor.

Ay estorninho do auelanedo,
cantades uos, e moyr' eu e peno,
d' amores ey mal.

Pela rribeyra do rryo,
cantando ya la uirgo d' amor:
quen amores a,
como dormira,
ay bela frol! ²⁷

Joan Airas de Santiago describes a shepherdess whom he sees wandering away from her companions and singing at dawn, accompanied by birds:

Pelo souto de Crexente
huã pastor ui andar,
muyt' alongada de gente
alzando uoz a cantar,
apertãdo--sse na ssaya,
quando saya la rraya
do ssol nas rribas do Ssar.

E as aues que uoauã
quando saya l' aluor
todas d' amores cantauan
pelos rramos d' arredor. ²⁸

In spite of the many allusions to the sea and fountains, to the trees and the birds, there is no close observation of Nature, there are no vivid descriptions. No poem is really about Nature herself. The love story is always the most important element of all the poems. We hear of the pine and the hazel, but nowhere are we made to see what makes the pine and the hazel different from other trees. Birds are seldom referred to by species; they are always aves, singing away in the branches. We are scarcely made aware of the many colors, sounds and moods of the sea. Except for the Biblical deer of the hills, the four-footed world is completely disregarded. Yet these touches of Nature, vague as they often are, have their charms. After the repetitious lovers' sighs and conventional praises of ladies in the Cantigas de Amor, the images of the Cantigas de Amigo are refreshing. The graceful pictures of the maiden washing her hair at the fountain or asking the pine tree and the waves for news of her lover are a delightful anticipation of the great flowering of bucolic poetry two or three centuries later in the verse of Bernardim Ribeiro, Sá de Miranda and Diogo Bernardes.

NOTES

1. M. Rodrigues Lapa, Lições de Literatura Portuguesa, 3rd ed.

(Coimbra, 1952), p. 126.

2. Ibid., p. 136.

3. Ibid., p. 137.

4. CV 456.

Spelling in the poems quoted follows that of the diplomatic editions of the following cancioneiros, or collections of poems, in which they are found: Henry H. Carter, Cancioneiro da Ajuda: A Diplomatic Edition (New York, 1941). Standard abbreviation: CA.

Ernesto Molteni, Il Canzoniere Portoghese Colocci-Brancuti (Halle a. S., 1880). Standard abbreviation: CB.

Ernesto Monaci, Il Canzoniere Portoghese della Biblioteca Vaticana (Halle a. S., 1875). Standard abbreviation: CV.

5. CA 251.
6. CA 156.
7. CB 903; CV 488.
8. CB 1192; CV 797.
9. CB 1191; CV 796.
10. CB 1188.
11. CB 689; CV 191.
12. CB 569; CV 172.
13. CB 1156; CV 758.
14. CB 582; CV 438.
15. CB 1284; CV 890.
16. CB 1280; CV 886.
17. CB 645; CV 246.
18. CB 920; CV 507.
19. CB 568; CV 171.
20. CB 570; CV 173.
21. CB 644; CV 245.
22. CB 879; CV 462.
23. CB 881; CV 464.
24. CB 1298; CV 902.
25. CB 641; CV 242.
26. CB 720; CV 321.
27. CB 868; CV 454.
28. CB 967; CV 554.

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RECENT BOOKS IN THE FIELD OF MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

Claude Blair. European Armour Circa 1066 to Circa 1700. New York: Macmillan, 1959. Pp. 248.

The American edition of the only reference work of medieval armor now in print is, with its many illustrations, a "must."

Bertram Colgrave. The Earliest Saints' Lives Written in England. London: Oxford University Press, 1959.

An excellently written study on the historical value of the lives of the early Anglo-Saxon saints, by one of the leading authorities on hagiographic literature.

Hubert Creekmore (editor). Lyrics of the Middle Ages. New York: Grove Press, 1959. Pp. 278.

A useful collection of translations, from most of the major languages of Europe, of lyric verse written during the millennium from 500 A. D. An anthology with a preface and valuable notes.

Máire and Liam de Paor. Early Christian Ireland. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1958. Pp. 264.

A fine new synthesis of the gradual absorption of Mediterranean culture by an unsubdued Celtic people from the fifth to the twelfth century, yielding to Roman religion and letters, though not to arms.

Richard B. Donovan, C.S.B. The Liturgical Drama in Spain. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1959. Pp. 229.

This monumental contribution examines nearly 500 manuscripts and early books in Spain, France, and England, and presents five new liturgical plays from Spain to add to the four previously known. It also discusses the relative dearth of liturgical drama in Spain, for which sound ecclesiastical reasons are deduced.

R. W. V. Elliott. Runes. Manchester: The University Press, 1959. Pp. 124.

A fine introductory handbook with photographs, comparative tables, and bibliography.

Adan de la Halle. Le Jeu de Robin et de Marion. Edited by Kenneth Varly. London: Harrap, 1959. Pp. xx; 147.

A competent and attractive new edition of the delightful thirteenth-century pastoral drama.

Alec Harman. Mediaeval and Early Renaissance Music. Fair

Lawn, N. J.: Essential Books, 1958. Pp. 268.

A readable and not overly technical study of the development of music in general during the Middle Ages; many examples.

Virginia Heines, S.C.N. Libellus de Alchemia. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959. Pp. 79.

This excellent translation of the famous book on alchemy attributed to Albertus Magnus provides likewise a brief and clear description of the often misunderstood objectives of alchemy and is a useful introduction to the subject.

Urban T. Homes, Jr., and Sister M. Amelia Klenke, O. P. Chrétien, Troyes, and the Grail. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959. Pp. 230.

This work sums up and culminates ten years of work by the authors on their allegorical interpretation of Perceval, with much valuable documentation.

Gordon Leff. Medieval Thought from Saint Augustine to Ockham. London: Pelican Books, 1958. Pp. 318.

A very useful, excellently written survey of medieval philosophy, in the traditions of this handy and low-priced but uniformly good series.

Reginald Lennard. Rural England 1086-1135. London: Oxford University Press, 1959. Pp. 409.

An account of manorial life in the Norman period; based on the Domesdaybook.

Roger Sherman Loomis (Editor). Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959. Pp. 574.

A collaborative history by some thirty noted scholars, which will remain the new standard text for some time.

May McKesack. The Fourteenth Century. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1959. Pp. 598.

A readable and excellent analysis which sifts the mass of research but does not become clouded with technical detail.

Per Nykrog. Les Fabliaux: Etude d'histoire littéraire et de stylistique médiévale. Copenhagen: Einar Munksgaard, 1957.

This study propounds the thesis that the fabliaux were not bourgeois in origin, as Bédier supposed, but were written for courtly circles. It clarifies many aspects of thirteenth-century literary life.

J. R. Partington. A History of Greek Fire and Gunpowder.

Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1960. Pp. 381.

This illustrated and well documented book is the most comprehensive and authoritative treatment of the subject in English.

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An excellent collection of essays by leading authorities on such topics as architecture, shipping, the art of war, commerce, heraldry, religious life, etc.

Cyril E. Smith. The University of Toulouse in the Middle Ages: Its Origins and Growth to 1500 A. D. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1958. Pp. 244.

Its thoroughness in the use of sources and the details given make this a valuable source for information on a medieval university.

Luitpold Wallach. Alcuin and Charlemagne. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959.

This book filled with information on the world of Charlemagne gives us added knowledge of Alcuin's literary technique and his influence over the Emperor.

Ernest H. Wilkins. Petrarch's Later Years. Cambridge: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1959. Pp. 322.

This work, written by the outstanding leader of Petrarchian scholarship, is an indispensable document for the beginnings of the Renaissance.

John A. Rea

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